United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/747
16 October 1990

TUESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- General Assembly confers observer status to International Committee of the Red Cross.

- UNRWA appeals for international support to continue "indispensable assistance" to Palestine refugees.

- Legal Committee hears proposal by Soviet Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs to set up United Nations authority to verify compliance with arms control treaties.

- 1990 World Food Day is observed by 140 nations at FAO headquarters in Rome, with activities dedicated to meeting challenge of feeding the world's fast-growing population.

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The General Assembly this morning conferred observer status in its proceedings to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

A resolution on the subject which was sponsored by 138 of the Organization's 159 Member States. Speakers at today's meeting stressed the unique character of the Red Cross under the 1949 Geneva Conventions, and said its observer status should not be seen as a precedent for other non-governmental organizations to seek that status.

Also this morning, the Assembly adopted two resolutions calling for continued co-operation between the United Nations and the Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee and the Latin American Economic System, respectively.

In keeping with its usual practice, the Assembly also took note of the Secretary-General's annual report on the work of the Organization.

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The Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), Giorgio Giacomelli, has

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appealed to the international community for support in providing "indispensable assistance" to Palestine refugees.

In his annual report to the Assembly, Mr. Giacomelli said that between July 1989 and June 1990, 249 Palestinians had been killed and more than 23,000 injured in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. He expressed profound concern that lack of funds could result in this indispensable assistance to refugees being cut or brought to a halt "within a matter of weeks".

The Commissioner-General said UNRWA had to manage its finances carefully so that the Agency could operate its emergency programme in Lebanon, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, as well as conduct regular education, health and relief and social services for more than 2 million refugees there and in Jordan and Syria.

By mid-1990, UNRWA still needed some $12 million to continue the emergency programme until the end of this year, he said, adding that a new injection of funds was required to carry on the programme next year.

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The Soviet Union has proposed the establishment of a United Nations verification authority to monitor compliance with arms control treaties and agreements, as well as to keep a close watch on military situations in areas of conflict. The proposal was advanced yesterday in the Assembly's Legal Committee as it continued its discussion of the peaceful settlement of disputes between States.

Vladimir F. Petrovsky, Soviet Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, said that such an authority might be established as a subsidiary body of the Security Council and could use space-based means of verification such as satellites. He also proposed that the Military Staff Committee be transformed into an effective body of co-operation. To give impetus to that effort, he suggested holding a Security Council meeting at the level of Chiefs of Staff of the armed forces of the five permanent Council members.

Earlier yesterday, Mr. Petrovsky announced at a press conference at Headquarters that his Government had submitted specific figures on the Soviet defence budget and military arsenal. His Government was declassifying the information and submitting it to the United Nations to pave the way for openness and trust, and to further disarmament efforts. The provision of such information, he said, would substantially enhance the role of the United Nations as "a guarantor of stability in the post-confrontation world".

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The tenth annual World Food Day, with the theme "Food for the Future" , was observed all over the world today, 16 October, with exhibitions, conferences and demonstrations to increase awareness of the problems of hunger, malnutrition and poverty.

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At a ceremony at the Rome headquarters of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), participants from 140 nations discussed how to meet the challenge of feeding the world's fast-growing population.

The FAO Director-General, Edouard Saouma, said in a statement that the focus this year was on the search for long-term solutions to the problems of the rapid growth of the world's population, which is expected to reach 8.5 billion in 2025. Even while fighting to produce adequate food for today, the earth's capacity to feed the still larger populations of tomorrow must be maintained as well.

Speakers at a special observance at United Nations Headquarters on Friday will include United States Representative E. "Kika" de la Garza, Chairman of the House Committee on Agriculture, Director-General Saouma and Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar.

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Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/748
17 October 1990

WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Expanded United Nations relief programme to begin reaching famine areas in Angola on 1 November.

- United Nations official says Organization's financial situation is improved "only marginally" since end of August and remains "precarious".

- UNDRO announces successful evacuation of some 700,000 third country nationals from Jordan in Iraq-Kuwait crisis.

- International standards for fair elections proposed in Social Committee.

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According to an announcement at Headquarters today, United Nations relief convoys will begin to move urgently needed humanitarian supplies to drought and war-induced famine areas in Angola on 1 November. This has been made possible by the Government of Angola's endorsement last week of a United Nations Plan of Operations for an expanded relief programme.

It was further announced that the plan, which has also been accepted by the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), aims at delivering 118,000 metric tonnes of relief supplies in the next six months to 1.9 million people in nine of the country's 18 provinces.

At a meeting with Angolan President Jose E. dos Santos yesterday, Under-Secretary-General Abdulrahim A. Farah conveyed a special message from Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar expressing satisfaction that all arrangements had been concluded for the launching of the Plan of Operations. The Secretary-General hoped that the implementation of the Plan would help to advance the peace process already under way, and that the concerted efforts of the United Nations, the Government of Angola and UNITA would be successful in responding to the urgent humanitarian needs of the Angolan people.

The total cost of the first phase of the programme, designed to run until the end of March next year, is expected to amount to some $75 million, the

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bulk of which will cover food aid and logistics, with approximately $22.5 million earmarked for non-food supplies and services.

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Total collections from member countries for 1990 to the United Nations regular budget now equalled $647 million, up from $626.7 million at the end of August, leaving $641 million uncollected for this and all prior years, according to the latest report on the status of contributions, dated 30 September.

Briefing correspondents on the report today, a United Nations official said that the Organization's financial situation had improved only marginally since the end of August and that it remained precarious.

The number of Member States who had paid in full for 1990 and all prior years was now sixty, up from 55 one month ago. The total amount outstanding in peace-keeping assessments was $430.9 million, down slightly from last month's figure of $444.7 million.

Asked if there was any word from the United States on payment of its contributions, the official replied that there continued to be "active contact" between the Secretariat and the United States on the scheduling of payments. Some payment was expected by the end of this month, without which the Organization "wouldn't make it to the end of the month", he said, adding that a figure of $40 million had been discussed.

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The evacuation of 708,970 third country nationals from Jordan has been successfully carried out by the Jordanian Government in close co-operation with the Office of United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator (UNDRO) and the rest of the international community.

UNDRO reported yesterday that the refugees, who since 5 August had been crossing into Jordan after fleeing from Iraq and Kuwait, had returned to their countries of origin. A human tragedy of immense proportion had thus been averted.

It was pointed out by UNDRO that no recent precedent existed for such a large-scale evacuation of third country nationals. There were no epidemic outbreaks in the transit camps, nor any deaths directly attributable to camp conditions.

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A proposal that the United Nations set international standards for fair elections and standard procedures for holding them, in cases of electoral assistance to Governments, has been made in the General Assembly's Social Committee.

Submitting the proposal, the representative of Ireland, Patrick Henessy, said recent experience in Namibia and Nicaragua had demonstrated that United Nations participation would always aim at enhancing the electoral process. He expected that the United Nations Observer Group for the Verification of Elections in Haiti (ONUVEH) would make an important contribution to consolidating democracy in that country.

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United Nations

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Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/749
18 October 1990

THURSDAY HIGHLIGHTS

◆ Secretary-General's envoy to Amman reports "dramatic" impact on Jordan of trade embargo against Iraq and Kuwait.

◆ Presidents of Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua welcome and support Salvadorian President's proposal to declare unilateral cease-fire once FMLN takes same decision.

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The impact on Jordan of the trade embargo against Iraq and Kuwait has been "dramatic", and it is the most affected country in the area, according to the Secretary-General's envoy to Jordan, Jean Ripert, who submitted a report to the Secretary-General this morning on his findings during his four-day stay in the country.

Briefing correspondents later today, Mr. Ripert said the assignment given him by the Secretary-General was to assess, in full co-operation with the Jordanian Government, the implications of the embargo, and to recommend appropriate remedies to Jordan's problems.

Stating that he had "no doubt that the authorities in Jordan are doing their best" to implement the Security Council's embargo resolution, he said that by the end of this year, the cost was expected to exceed $1 billion for a five-month period.

He stressed the need for the international community to help compensate Jordan.

* * *

The Presidents of Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua have welcomed the proposal by President Alfredo Cristiani of El Salvador regarding his Government's preparedness to declare a cease-fire that would take effect as soon as the Frente Farabundo Martii para la Liberacion Nacional (FMLN) takes the same decision.

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In a joint communiqué, the text of which was transmitted to the Secretary-General, the Presidents said they supported the Salvadorian Government proposal and called on FMLN to declare a cease-fire as soon as possible.

They stated that the continuing armed conflict constituted a threat to the peace and security of Central America and that a cease-fire would create an atmosphere conducive to a peaceful and democratic settlement in EL Salvador.

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United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/750
19 October 1990

FRIDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Secretary-General appeals to all Governments to give utmost priority to food needs of affected populations, at special observance of 1990 World Food Day at Headquarters.

- Danger of nuclear confrontation has been significantly reduced, if not eliminated, according to updated nuclear-weapons report to General Assembly.

- Secretary-General says time has come to "define the emerging international consensus" in order to reach political settlement of conflict in Afghanistan.

- Speakers in Social Committee debate call for more programmes for disabled.

* * *

At a special ceremony at Headquarters marking World Food Day 1990, Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar said today that despite the end of the cold war, the situation in the Persian Gulf and in the Middle East reminded us that it was dangerous to minimize the importance of the different factors which were the source of the tensions in many parts of the world. Lasting peace and security could only be reached if the problems were solved as a whole.

The Secretary-General went on to say that today, sixteen years after the World Food Conference in 1974, when Governments had committed themselves to seek to defeat hunger and malnutrition within the decennium, more people than ever in the history of man were struck by famine.

He cited estimates that in the year 2000 the world would have to feed an additional 1 billion people, and stressed that the situation would get worse if efforts were not concerted to resolve the famine problems at the very source.

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Appealing to all Governments to give the utmost priority to the food needs of the affected populations, the Secretary-General also urged all concerned to recognize and respect the right to food for children, women and all innocent victims caught in conflicts by guaranteeing safe passage and unhampered distribution of food assistance.

Also participating in the observance, the President of the General Assembly, Guido de Marco (Malta) said that as a result of the East-West détente, a good portion of the resources previously committed to the cold war could be directed to the assistance of the world's most needy and disadvantaged.

However, he said, it was tragic that the events of the past three months had snatched that hope from its realization. It was the United Nations responsibility to ensure that the concerns and issues of the world's developing countries and the cause of its most disadvantaged peoples were not forgotten nor overtaken by the unfolding of political events, Mr. de Marco said.

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The quantitative growth of nuclear-weapon arsenals has been stopped, the total number of nuclear warheads in the world has declined and the danger of nuclear confrontation has been significantly reduced, if not eliminated altogether.

These are among the main conclusions of a newly issued update of the 1980 Comprehensive Study on Nuclear Weapons mandated by the General Assembly.

On the other hand, the report goes on to say that qualitative improvements of nuclear-weapon systems, though confined to just a few areas, continue without significant restriction and the question of the cessation of nuclear-weapon tests remains highly divisive.

In a Foreword to the report, the Secretary-General observes that the study was carried out during a period of "far-reaching changes in international relations" and an "unprecedented evolution in the relationship of East and West". In fact, he says, it has been a period when the nuclear age experienced -- for the first time -- the initiation of an effective process of reducing nuclear-weapon stockpiles.

In a section dealing with the issue of nuclear testing, the report indicates that all five nuclear-weapon States (United States, Soviet Union, United Kingdom, France and China) have conducted nuclear tests as part of their weapons programmes. Between 1945 and 1989 there were 1,819 internationally recorded tests (an average of one test every nine days).

Testing has been carried out on every continent except South America and Antarctica, as well as on a number of island Territories in the Pacific

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Ocean. The United States, the Soviet Union and China test at isolated sites within their respective mainlands. The United Kingdom uses the American test site in Nevada. France has two test sites in French Polynesia.

The study goes on to summarize the costs of acquiring and maintaining nuclear weapons -- an "enormous" cost that could only be sustained by a "relatively small number of countries" -- and the physical, medical and environmental effects of nuclear-weapons production and testing.

* * *

In the report of 17 October (A/45/635) on the situation in Afghanistan, Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar has stated that the time has come to "define the emerging international consensus" in a concrete manner in order to give the necessary impetus to the political settlement of the Afghan conflict.

The problem relating to the country could not be solved except by political means, and for that, the Secretary-General's report states, a consensus was needed both at the international and the national levels.

The report states that a consensus should comprise, first and foremost, recognition of the right of the Afghan people to determine their own future. Secondly, it should provide for a "credible and impartial transition mechanism", with appropriate powers and authority, that would allow the Afghan people to participate in a free and fair election process, taking into account Afghan traditions. The consensus should further indicate the need for a cessation of hostilities and a halt to the arms supply to all sides.

* * *

Most speakers in the General Assembly's Social Committee yesterday called for stepped up efforts to achieve the full integration of disabled persons in society.

Addressing the Committee, the representative of Saudi Arabia, Abdullah Al-Ghanem, said 10 per cent of the world population was disabled and 80 per cent of those lived in the developing countries. As a disabled person himself, he said: "We don't want sympathy and charity; we want our legitimate rights in society."

The United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons has just two years remaining. On Wednesday, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Promotion of the Decade, Hans Hoegh, said that although progress had been made, it was not nearly as much as was expected. There was still a big difference between how the disabled were treated in the rich and poorer countries. He called on countries that had not done so to establish national co-ordinating committees to address the needs of the disabled.

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United Nations

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Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/751
22 October 1990

MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Secretary-General expresses grave concern at "brutal stabbings" of three Israelis in Jerusalem.

- Secretary-General is "profoundly shocked" at murder of Dany Chamoun family in Lebanon.

- Calls for continued international donor support of special emergency programmes are heard in Economic and Financial Committee.

* * *

In a statement issued today, the Spokesman for the Secretary-General said that Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar had learned with grave concern of the brutal stabbings in Jerusalem yesterday, and again today, that led to the deaths of three Israelis. He condemned all such acts of violence which could only deepen the bitterness and mistrust that already prevailed in the area. He called on all concerned to put an end to the violence and to exercise the utmost restraint.

* * *

In relation to a separate development, the Spokesman said the Secretary-General was profoundly shocked by the murder in Beirut yesterday of Dany Chamoun and members of his family. That incident was all the more disturbing in view of the determination expressed by Lebanese leaders, in the aftermath of last weekend's bloodshed, to restore law and order in the country. The Secretary-General appealed for restraint at a time when, more than ever, it was essential that violence in Lebanon give way to tolerance and peaceful conciliation.

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The view that the overall success of special emergency programmes was dependent on continuing international donor support, the commitment of

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affected Governments and effective and co-ordinated response by the United Nations system, was expressed by speakers this morning in the Economic and Financial Committee.

In its continued discussion of special economic and disaster assistance, the Committee heard introductory statements to the Secretary-General's reports on emergency assistance to a number of countries including Iran, the Sudan, Mozambique and Lebanon.

In his statement, M'Hamed Essaafi, United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator (UNDRO) and Special Representative for the Emergency in Northern Iran said the UNDRO Office had assumed its co-ordination role, in the framework of the international assistance provided to the victims. The work of the agency, particularly the assessment missions in the disaster area, was facilitated by excellent co-operation on the part of central and local authorities and the population, he said.

James Baker, Director of the Unit for Special Emergency Programmes within the Department for Special Political Questions, said Operation Lifeline Sudan was one of the successes of United Nations relief operations and was an example of how two sides in a conflict could allow aid for civilians.

Adequate funding for non-food sectors was no longer forthcoming, however, and it was already evident that rains in the first half of 1990 had been insufficient. Acute food scarcity prevailed in much of the country, and the number of displaced persons continued to swell.

The report on Mozambique highlighted one of the painful truths about humanitarian assistance programmes, Mr. Baker said, as a prolonged crisis received diminishing international support. Donor support had fallen from $330 million pledged in 1987 to $104 million pledged in 1990. If current efforts by the Government to settle the war succeeded, the number of those needing assistance would increase as people returned home.

The overall success of special emergency programmes depended on the commitment and effort of affected Governments, he said, and required an effective and co-ordinated response by the United Nations system. A response from the international community was also needed. The needs were growing, and those in a position to do so should provide support to special emergency programmes.

George Abu-Jawdeh, Officer-in-Charge of United Nations Assistance for the Reconstruction and Development of Lebanon said the situation in that country in the last 12 months had been unstable and violent, and tens of thousands of people had continued to emigrate. The Gulf crisis had undermined activities which in recent years had sustained the country's economy, and since early August, 55,000 Lebanese (2 per cent of the population), had returned from the Gulf region, further exacerbating the unemployment situation.

He shared the concern of the Government of Lebanon about maintaining donor interest in Lebanon's needs. "At a time when the plight of the civilian population is worse than any time before", he said, "strong donor commitment and continued adequate levels of assistance are of even greater importance."

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United Nations

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DH/752
23 October 1990

TUESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

◆ Secretary-General's Representative calls for strong leadership and systematic action by creditor and debtor nations to combat debt crisis.

◆ General Assembly adopts report of International Atomic Energy Agency; hears statement by Agency Director-General.

◆ The view that Saharan electorate body would be outnumbered by Moroccan voters in referendum proposed for Western Sahara is expressed by representative of POLISARIO Front in Decolonization Committee.

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High profile leadership and systemic action will be required to combat the debt crisis, said Bettino Craxi, Personal Representative of the Secretary-General on Debt, as he presented his report this morning to the Economic and Financial Committee this morning.

Mr. Craxi suggested the creation of an agency within the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) that would work with the support of the regional banks to solve the debt problems of the major indebted areas -- Mediterranean Africa and the Middle East, sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America, Asia and Eastern Europe.

The crisis was systematic, Mr. Craxi told the Committee, adding that in order to solve it in an efficient and long-lasting manner, action must involve all the components of the system. First of all, 90 per cent of the servicing of poor countries' bilateral loans should be virtually cancelled, he said. The same kind of measures were required for lower middle-income countries.

Although his general report was finished just before the crisis in the Persian Gulf following Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, the large region of North Africa and the Middle East, up to the Horn of Africa in the south, received special attention, Mr. Craxi said. It was a specific area of interdependence between creditor and debtor countries, particularly for the European Economic Community (EEC) nations with Mediterranean interests, the rich oil-producing countries of the Gulf on one side, and the indebted Afro-Arab countries of the

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region on the other. It was necessary to propose a moratorium for the countries most hit by the crisis.

Referring to Eastern Europe (excluding the Soviet Union), Mr. Craxi said the debt of those countries amounted to $100 billion at the end of 1988 of which 40 per cent was in Poland and 20 per cent in Hungary. It was important to explore the possibility of setting up an East European monetary union with the financial assistance of EEC, as was done for Western Europe after the Second World War, he said.

* * *

The General Assembly adopted today by consensus a resolution on the report of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

Before adopting the resolution, the Assembly heard an introduction of the IAEA report by the Agency's Director-General, Hans Blix, who said that nuclear-powered electricity was a substantial source of carbon dioxide-free energy and that it could be expanded.

Mr. Blix cited a sharp increase in the services of IAEA in the field of nuclear power safety, particularly in East and Central Europe, and drew attention to a new Code of Practice on the International Transboundary Movement of Radioactive Waste adopted by consensus last month by the IAEA General Conference. He also drew attention to the Agency's lead role in efforts to eradicate the new world screwworm in North Africa by means of insects sterilized by gamma rays.

Also addressing the Assembly, Piotr K. Kravchenko, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Byelorussia, made a number of proposals, including one relating to the establishment of a nuclear-free zone in Byelorussia, the Ukraine and the Baltic States. History, he said, was yet to bring in a moral verdict against those who for over three years had been hiding the real truth about the consequences of the Chernobyl accident. He proposed setting up a voluntary Chernobyl trust fund for financing related programmes of international co-operation and assistance. He also suggested that 26 April, the day when the Chernobyl disaster occurred, be proclaimed "Day of Prevention of Nuclear and Other Man-made Disasters".

* * *

The Decolonization Committee yesterday took up the question of Western Sahara, hearing the view that the fewer the number of Moroccan soldiers remaining in the Territory during the transitional phase, the freer and more democratic the referendum would be.

Expressing that opinion, Brahim Mokhtar, representative of POLISARIO -- the Popular Front for the Liberation of Saguia el-Hamra and Rio de Oro -- said that in October 1975, Moroccan troops "erupted violently into Sahrawi territory". Today there were more than 350,000 Moroccans in Western Sahara, 100,000 of them belonging to the armed forces and police. Saharan people had

disappeared without trace, and Saharan youth of voting age had been dispersed in northern Morocco, he continued. That meant that in the referendum proposed for the Territory, the Saharan electoral body would be a mere 63,000 voters facing 350,000 Moroccans, six times their number.

The Committee has before it a draft resolution on the question of Western Sahara, submitted by 41 countries. By the draft, the General Assembly would appeal again to Morocco and POLISARIO to display the co-operation and the political goodwill necessary for the completion of the peace process with a view to a speedy settlement of the question of Western Sahara.

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United Nations

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Prepared by Central News

DH/753
24 October 1990

WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Security Council is unanimous in expressing alarm at Israel's refusal to accept mission of Secretary-General; urges Government to reconsider its decision.

- Secretary-General and President of General Assembly deliver messages on occasion of United Nations forty-fifth anniversary.

- General Assembly observes fortieth anniversary of multilateral technical co-operation activities for development; hears statements by Secretary-General and Assembly President.

- Secretary-General asks Bettino Craxi to continue as his special adviser on development problems and on strengthening peace and security.

+ United Nations Group for verification of elections in Haiti moves into position.

* * *

At a resumed meeting on the situation on the occupied Palestinian territories, the Security Council tonight in an unanimous decision expressed alarm at the rejection of Security Council resolution 672 (1990) by the Israeli Government, and the country's refusal to accept the mission of the Secretary-General.

By adopting resolution 673 (1990) -- which was sponsored by Colombia, Cuba, Malaysia and Yemen -- the Council also expressed grave concern at the continued deterioration of the situation in the occupied territories.

The Council urged the Israeli Government to reconsider its decision and insisted that it permit the mission of the Secretary-General. It also asked the Secretary-General to submit to the Council the report requested in resolution 672, and said it would give it full and expeditious consideration.

Among the speakers, the representative of Israel said that on 9 October, the events on the Temple Mount made the international community forget about

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the Gulf crisis. Saddam Hussein had now, after three months, been "let of the hook". Meanwhile, the mutilation of Kuwait continued without the interference of the Council, he said.

The incident in Jerusalem was the last thing Israel had wanted to happen in spite of what the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) would want the international community to believe. On the contrary, it was the PLO who needed the incident, in order to "blow new life into the situation". The Israeli representative quoted Arab officials as saying said that the incident was an attempt on the part of Saddam Hussein and the PLO to divert attention from the Gulf crisis.

The representative of PLO said his organization was "painfully" observing the delay of the Council when dealing with the issue of the occupied territories. That was in contradiction with other measures of the Council when it was acting promptly. If the Council was to seriously deal with the situation in the Middle East, he said, the overall majority in the Council for resolutions on the situation in the occupied territories must become a unanimity. In addition, the PLO was not quite satisfied with resolution 672, which he found "inadequate" in its condemnation of Israel. The PLO was ready to fully co-operate with the Secretary-General in his efforts to send a mission to the area.

* * *

The forty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations was commemorated at Headquarters today, 24 October.

In a message delivered on the occasion, Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar stated that the past year had been possibly the most historic period in the life of the Organization. It had been a time of solid accomplishment -- the success of complex operations in Namibia and Central America had shown the ability of the United Nations to manage transitions from conflict to peace.

With the termination of the cold war, the "paralysis that had seized peace-making over four decades" had also ended. The value of multilateral effort could no longer be in question, he said.

The persistence, however, of some old conflicts that gravely threatened peace and the eruption of the crisis resulting from the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, with its incalculable consequences, subjected the Organization to a severe test to see if it had the capacity to establish the rule of law in international relations and consistently apply its principles.

The Secretary-General then said that while the "iron curtain" had been brought down, it must not be forgotten that the "poverty curtain" still separated two parts of the world community. As long as such disparity remained and violations of human rights continued, a new global dispensation would remain more a hope than a reality.

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Assembly President Guido de Marco (Malta) in his message said that prominent among the United Nations achievements was the decolonization process. Forty-five years ago, he said, the Organization started with 51 members. Today, it numbered 159, most of which were colonies 45 years ago.

Millions of people relied upon the Organization to solve the Gulf crisis and trusted its ability to see Security Council resolutions implemented through diplomatic means, Mr. de Marco said.

* * *

The General Assembly this morning observed the fortieth anniversary of United Nations multilateral technical co-operation activities for development and the tenth anniversary of the University for Peace.

The Assembly adopted, without a vote, a resolution requesting the Secretary-General to establish an agreement of co-operation between the University for Peace -- located in Costa Rica -- and the United Nations.

In a statement on the occasion of the anniversary of multilateral technical co-operation, the Secretary-General said that despite increases in average life expectancy and adult literacy, almost one out of every four people in the developing world was still "trapped in the vicious cycle of absolute poverty". One of the major challenges for the United Nations system in the 1990s must be the eradication of poverty and the promotion and consolidation of human development.

Assembly President de Marco said United Nations co-operation activities had offered developing countries an alternative to bilateral aid. That alternative, characterized by universality, political neutrality and commercial disinterestedness, continued to make a marked contribution to the development efforts of developing countries.

* * *

In a statement today, a spokeswoman for the Secretary-General said he had met earlier with Bettino Craxi, his Personal Representative on Debt, who yesterday had presented to him his conclusions concerning the problem of debt. Mr. Craxi submitted his final report on the problem of debt yesterday to the General Assembly's Economic and Financial Committee.

Mr. Perez de Cuellar asked Mr. Craxi to continue his co-operation with the United Nations as Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on problems of development, and more particularly in the search for a new equilibrium aimed at strengthening peace and security in the world, the spokeswoman said.

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The first group of United Nations observers have moved into position in the six administrative districts from where they will be supervising and observing elections in Haiti.

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The observers -- led by the Secretary-General's Personal Representative, Joan Augusto de Medicis -- will be working closely with officials of regional and local voting stations in those districts.

Other observers will remain at their posts in Port-au-Prince and its outlying areas. They will be assisted by technical specialists due to arrive in the Haitian capital this week, increasing the number of those serving in the mission to about 100.

On Monday, Mr. de Medicis had met with the President of Haiti, Ertha Pascal Trouillot. In brief statements, they defined the mission's goals and stressed that its observer role during the elections could only further strengthen co-operation between Haiti and the United Nations.

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United Nations

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DH/754
25 October 1990

THURSDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Political and Security Committee observes Disarmament Week, hears statements by General Assembly President, Chairman and Secretary-General.

- Proposal to create "economic security council" heard at UNDP panel discussion on "Development Challenges for the 1990s".

- Human Rights Committee takes up report on confrontation between Mohawk Indians and Canada's authorities.

* * *

The General Assembly's Political and Security Committee this morning held a special meeting in observance of Disarmament Week, which began yesterday. Proclaimed by the Assembly in 1978 to be observed annually to promote disarmament, the Week includes this year the Eighth United Nations Pledging Conference on the World Disarmament Campaign.

In a statement before the Committee, Assembly President Guido de Marco (Malta) said he was heartened by the many positive developments in the world's political situation in the past 12 months. However, there was an urgent need to resolve regional conflicts -- "open or simmering" -- through the building of trust and confidence among nations. The Roman principle, "if you want peace, prepare for war", had rightly been subjected to great criticism, since it justified the arms race, which was only a step short of war. Many had changed the Roman principle into, "if you want peace, prepare for peace", he said.

The Committee's Chairman, Jai Pratap Rana (Nepal), said that with the opportunity provided by the new climate of international relations, disarmament must be extended beyond the nuclear and conventional arsenals of the great Powers and their allies. "Disarmament, to be meaningful, has to be the joint effort of all nations", he stated.

Also addressing the Committee, Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar said "a saner concept of security" was taking hold throughout the world and cited the new security arrangements in Europe as having an importance that

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For information media--not an official record

went beyond the sheer numbers of arms involved. Mutual confidence was replacing suspicion and fear in an area traditionally regarded as one of the most heavily armed in the world, he said. However, he added, the constructive change in Europe had yet to be extended to other regions.

In a recent report on the World Disarmament Campaign, the Secretary-General drew attention to the fact that the changes in the East/West relationship and in the security environment directly shaped by it had tended to narrow the popular base of non-governmental organizations in the field of disarmament. However, the report said, a well-informed and active community of non-governmental organizations continued to play an important role.

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The establishment of an "economic security council" to bring major development issues within the framework of the United Nations was one of the ideas suggested yesterday at a panel discussion at Headquarters sponsored by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

The discussion, on "Development Challenges for the 1990s", was held to mark the fortieth anniversary of multilateral technical co-operation for development within the United Nations.

The initiator of the proposal, Mahbub Ul Haq, former Planning and Finance Minister of Pakistan and currently Special Adviser to the Administration of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), said the 1990s might well become a decade of unprecedented opportunities if only the international community would have the vision and the courage to seize those opportunities.

For that purpose, he suggested that the United Nations be reformed to assume development leadership as well as political leadership. That reform should include the establishment of an economic security council that would include the veto power.

Other speakers stressed the need for greater co-operation between Governments within the United Nations, suggesting some type of elected parliamentary mechanism to facilitate that co-operation.

Among the participants in the panel discussion were Oscar Arias Sanchez, former President of Costa Rica and Nobel Peace Prize laureate, Lisbet Palme, Chairman of the Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and William H. Draper III, UNDP Administrator.

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The confrontation between Mohawk Indians and Canadian authorities in August at Oka, Quebec, had been a difficult test on human rights, Canada's Permanent Representative to the United Nations Office at Geneva, Gerald Shannon, told the Human Rights Committee, which is holding a three-week session.

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Introducing two reports on the measures Canada had taken to give effect to the provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Mr. Shannon said his country's human rights record was a source of pride.

Regarding the events at Oka involving Mohawk Indians, he said the conflict had "demonstrated the threat that violence can pose for fundamental rights". It had also shown the ability of Canadian institutions to confront such a test of human rights and to bring about a peaceful solution. Discussions had started between the federal Government, the government of Quebec and Mohawks at Kanesatake to deal with the transfer of land, and unification of the community, as well as social and economic issues. Mr. Shannon said several long-standing initiatives concerning indigenous people were under way. Following a decision of the Committee, the Indian Act had been amended to remove discriminatory provisions. Some 76,000 people had now acquired or had been reinstated to Indian status as a result, he said.

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United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/755
26 October 1990

FRIDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Twenty Governments donate nearly $1.3 million at World Disarmament Campaign Pledging Conference.

- General Assembly calls for continued United Nations co-operation with Islamic Conference and Organization of American States.

- Palestinian Rights Committee appeals to Security Council to pursue, with renewed determination, its efforts to end Arab-Israeli conflict.

- Decolonization Committee recommends that all possible assistance be rendered to African front-line and neighbouring States to help rebuild their economies, damaged by South African aggression and destabilization.

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The Eighth United Nations Pledging Conference for the World Disarmament Campaign yesterday received donations from 20 Governments amounting to $1,258,308. Of that amount, the Campaign itself, established to promote the cause of disarmament, was pledged some $106,000 for its activities, and a pledge of $888,000 went to the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research.

Other recipients were regional disarmament centres in Asia and the Pacific, in Latin America and the Caribbean, and in Africa. Pledges for specific activities included approximately $150,000 for an International Conference on Disarmament, scheduled to be held in Teheran, and [illegible]0,000 for the United Nations Fellowship Programme.

In a statement at the Pledging Conference, the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, Yasushi Akashi, said that since the establishment of the World Disarmament Campaign, changes had transformed the international political climate. Co-operation and dialogue had replaced conflict and confrontation among many States. Yet, the positive achievements on bilateral and regional levels had not been reflected in equal progress on the global disarmament scene.

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For information media—not an official record

The establishment of the United Nations Regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament, he said, resulted from the increasing importance that many Governments attached to regional and subregional approaches to disarmament and arms limitation.

* * *

The General Assembly yesterday called for continued United Nations co-operation with two international organizations -- the Islamic Conference and the Organization of American States.

The Assembly adopted, without a vote, a resolution by which the Secretary-General was asked to strengthen co-operation and co-ordination between the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference. Such co-operation relates to food security and agriculture, scientific and technological development, the eradication of illiteracy, assistance to refugees and the development of trade.

Also without a vote, the Assembly recognized the effectiveness of the co-operation between the United Nations and the Organization of American States (OAS), and called for continued mutual efforts. It called particular attention to the co-ordination of both organizations' missions in the verification of the Nicaraguan elections.

In addition, the Assembly began discussion of United Nations co-operation with the League of Arab States but decided to continue consultation of this matter on a date to be announced.

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The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People adopted yesterday its report to the General Assembly, in which it appealed to the Security Council to renew its efforts to end the Arab-Israeli conflict and to take steps towards the convening of an international conference to address that problem.

Pending progress towards a political settlement, the Committee urged that all necessary measures be taken to protect the Palestinians in the territory. It also called on Israel to respect the national rights of the Palestinian people, and called for Palestine "to be accorded its rightful place within the international community and the United Nations".

Addressing the Committee, the observer for Palestine, M. Nasser Al-Kidwa, said the crimes recently perpetrated by the Israeli authorities in Jerusalem and throughout the occupied territories, together with recent Security Council resolutions, called for greater focus on the protection of Palestinians. He called on the Committee to support the establishment of an observer group under United Nations auspices, which would operate in Jerusalem and throughout the occupied territory.

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The Decolonization Committee recommended yesterday that the General Assembly stress the need for the United Nations system to render all possible assistance to the African front-line and neighbouring States to help rebuild their economies which have been damaged by South Africa's acts of aggression and destabilization. It also called on the Assembly to continue to support the people of South Africa.

By a draft, adopted by a vote of 105 in favour to 12 against, with 23 abstentions, the Assembly would condemn extensive links between certain countries and South Africa, and the growing military and nuclear co-operation between Israel and the racist regime.

By another draft, on Western Sahara, approved without a vote, the Committee would urge the Assembly to reaffirm that the question concerning that Territory a was a question of decolonization which remained to be completed on the basis of its people's right to self-determination and independence.

The Committee also approved drafts on questions relating to Gibraltar, New Caledonia, Anguilla, Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, St. Helena (by a recorded vote of 106 to 2, with 31 abstentions), the Cayman Islands, Montserrat, the Turks and Caicos Islands, Tokelau and Pitcairn.

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United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/756
29 October 1990

MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Security Council demands that Iraq stop taking third-country nationals as hostages in Iraq and Kuwait; Cuba and Yemen abstain in vote.

- Secretary-General says prospects for world economy have "worsened considerably"; sense of optimism is replaced by "great uncertainty" due to recent developments in Persian Gulf.

- Military Staff Committee holds informal consultations to exchange views and information on situation in Gulf.

- Five permanent members of Security Council express concern over continuing difficulties of Supreme National Council of Cambodia in effort to agree on its presidency.

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The Security Council this afternoon demanded that Iraq stop taking third-country nationals hostage in Iraq and Kuwait, that it stop mistreating and oppressing nationals of Kuwait and third States, and that it ensure their immediate access to food, water and basic services.

It took this action by adopting resolution 674 (1990) by a vote of 13 in favour to none against, with 2 abstentions (Cuba, Yemen). By that text, the Council also invited States to supply it with information regarding substantiated cases of mistreatment of their nationals.

Also, citing Iraq's liability for any loss, damage or injury caused to foreign nationals and corporations as a result of its invasion and occupation of Kuwait, the Council invited countries to collect information regarding such claims, with a view to establishing arrangements for restitution or financial compensation.

The Council further expressed its "trust" in the Secretary-General to make available his good offices and pursue appropriate diplomatic efforts in order to reach a peaceful solution to the crisis on the basis of previous Council resolutions on the question.

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For information media--not an official record

Before the Council acted, Amir Al-Anbari (Iraq), speaking for more than an hour, called for the crisis to be solved in an Arab framework. He said that by ignoring President Saddam Hussein's proposal to solve all the problems of the region in a just and equitable manner, the Council had increased the risk of war and sent a message to the "Zionist entity" and others that they could continue to act with impunity.

Commenting on the resolution, the Iraqi representative said it implied that the Secretary-General's good offices could bear fruit only if Iraq ceded its national interests and capitulated. Why should there be concern about the freedom of movement of third-country nationals, when all the people of Iraq were being held hostage by foreign forces? he asked.

For Kuwait, Mohammad A. Abulhasan said the Iraqi regime behaved as though it were not aware that the Arab League had condemned its aggression within hours of the invasion, and that the Arab Summit had called for its unconditional withdrawal from Kuwait.

The delegates of Cuba and Yemen said the text was not sufficiently supportive of the diplomatic efforts of the Secretary-General.

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The prospects for the world economy have worsened considerably in the last few months, according to a recent update of the World Economic Survey, 1990, issued by the Secretary-General. The update, dated 19 October, is based on information available as of mid-September.

The sense of optimism that was generated by the dramatic changes in Eastern Europe and the reduction of tension between the super-Powers had come to be replaced by a "great uncertainty about the immediate prospect for the world economy", the report stated. That trend was mostly due to the recent developments in the Persian Gulf, but the current economic trend in a number of countries, particularly in Eastern Europe, also appeared "worse than expected", and in many cases it was almost certain to be "further worsened by the Gulf crisis."

The report noted that the Gulf crisis had already taken its toll in the form of higher inflation and loss of confidence in the world economy, which was already slowing down. In addition, the situation in that area had greatly reduced the predictability of the world economy even in the short term.

In the developing countries, according to the report, growth had reached its lowest level since 1983, as a result of, among other factors, problems of the debt and stabilization and a cooling of overheated economies.

Efforts continued to strengthen the functioning of the international economy in the multilateral trade negotiations under the Uruguay Round. Those talks had fallen dangerously behind schedule, the report said. Broad

Agreements were to have been reached in each of the negotiating groups by July-August, and legal texts of agreements were to be signed in December, the deadline for the completion of the Round.

* * *

Members of the United Nations Military Staff Committee today held informal consultations at a senior level to exchange views and information on the situation in the Gulf region.

A communiqué issued at Headquarters said the meeting was to be held at the Mission of France to the United Nations, the current coordinator for the five permanent members of the Security Council.

According to the communiqué, the objective of the meeting was to discuss the activities related to the implementation of the sanctions régime set out in three Security Council resolutions: 661, which imposed trade embargo against Iraq and Kuwait; 665, which called on States to halt maritime shipping to and from those two countries; and 670, by which the Council instituted an air embargo against Iraq and Kuwait.

Today's meeting, within the framework of regular informal consultation among ambassadorial representatives of the five permanent members, was attended by the most senior military officers ever to be present at such a meeting: Vice-Admiral Alain Coatanea, Director of the Joint Staff (France); Major General Du Kuanyi, Head of Delegation to the Military Staff Committee (China); Lieutenant-General Michael Carns, Director of the Joint Staff (United States); Colonel General Bronislav A. Omelichev, First Deputy Chief of the General Staff (Soviet Union); and Major-General Beckett, Head of British Defence Staff in Washington (United Kingdom).

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The five permanent members of the Security Council have expressed concern over the continuing difficulties of the Supreme National Council of Cambodia to agree on its presidency. The National Council -- composed of the four parties to the conflict -- has not yet formed a delegation to occupy Cambodia's seat in the General Assembly.

In a statement issued in connection with consultations held two weeks ago at Headquarters, Li Daoyu (China), Pierre-Louis Blanc (France), Yuli M. Vorontsov (Soviet Union), Thomas Pickering (United States) and Sir David Hannay (United Kingdom), reiterated that should Prince Norodom Sihanouk be elected by the National Council as its President, "the Five would welcome" that decision.

They urged the Cambodian parties to resolve as soon as possible the question, so as to enable the Supreme National Council to play its role in the settlement process.

The Five also called for the speedy reconvening of the Paris Conference on Cambodia on the ministerial level before the end of 1990 in order to adopt the comprehensive settlement agreement. It is hoped that the reconvening of the Conference will lead to the rapid deployment of a United Nations operation to supervise elections in Cambodia.

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United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/757
30 October 1990

TUESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Secretary-General opens Economic and Financial Committee's debate on external debt crisis and development.

- Commissioner-General of UNRWA says "explosive interplay of pressures, expectations and frustrations" in occupied Palestinian territory, along with Gulf crisis, is increasing demand for Agency's services.

- Executive-Director of United Nations Environment Programme warns that only "dramatic reductions" in emissions of so-called greenhouse gases will stop climate change and "forestall global catastrophe".

* * *

Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar this afternoon told the General Assembly's Economic and Financial Committee that the continuing crisis of external indebtedness of developing countries reflected a "deep-rooted malaise" in international economic and financial relationships.

Opening the Committee's debate on external debt crisis and development, he said the debt situation had become a major impediment to growth and development in most of the developing countries and to the revitalization of the global economy. The total external debt of developing countries had grown from $740 billion in 1982 to $1,100 billion in 1989. Subsequently, economic conditions in much of the third world demanded a dynamic and broad-based approach that would have a real and immediate impact. The Secretary-General said the scope and the extent of the problem had been further aggravated by the Gulf crisis and the subsequent oil-price rise, which had made the situation "intolerable" for most of the oil-importing developing countries.

He called for a comprehensive strategy on debt aimed at effectively reducing the total stock of debt and debt-servicing, and at restoring the capacity of the debtor countries to meet their debt obligations.

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For information media—not an official record

In an address before the General Assembly's Political and Security Committee yesterday, the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), Giorgio Giacomelli, said the current situation in the occupied Palestinian territory, along with the Gulf crisis, was increasing demand for the Agency's services. At the same time, UNRWA was experiencing "serious financial difficulties", he said.

Introducing the Agency's annual report for the period ending 30 June, and updating it on recent events, Mr. Giacomelli said security considerations in Lebanon continued to limit the mobility of personnel. In the territories, the explosive interplay of pressures, expectations and frustrations was growing. The UNRWA was continuously meeting difficulties imposed by the authorities, such as harassment, beatings and detentions of staff in performance of their duties.

During the Persian Gulf crisis, the Agency had been participating in international efforts to keep hundreds of thousands of persons leaving Iraq and Kuwait for Jordan. The large number of Palestinians fleeing the region had increased demand for UNRWA's assistance. Most of this could so far be met from existing resources, but UNRWA's capacity to respond to additional requirements had reached its limit.

According to the report, the Agency's working capital reserve had not increased in 1989 and was currently $28.9 million, which was considered inadequate given the Agency's steadily growing operations. The estimated total budget of UNRWA for 1990 was $242.3 million.

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Speaking at the opening of the Second World Climate Conference in Geneva, yesterday, the Executive-Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Dr. Mostafa Tolba, said scientific estimates of a rise in global temperature of up to three degrees Celsius by the end of the next century might be "conservative". He warned that nothing less than dramatic reductions of emissions of greenhouse gases would stop the warming up of the climate and "forestall global catastrophe".

A recently released report of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and UNEP concludes that global warming could cause serious environmental damage starting in the early years of the next century. The report recommends the establishment of limits for the average global temperature and sea level.

Leaders from more than 100 countries and some 500 scientific and socio-economic experts are currently meeting for the Conference, to be followed next week by a ministerial meeting which is expected to adopt a declaration.

An international convention on global warming is expected to be formally negotiated at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, scheduled for 1992 in Brazil.

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United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/758
31 October 1990

WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Secretary-General recommends that Security Council extend mandate of United Nations Observer Group in Central America (ONUCA) for another six months.

- Government of El Salvador and FMLN agree on enhancing intermediary role of Secretary-General's Representative and on emphasizing confidential character of future direct meetings.

- United Nations support for initiatives to implement Organization of African Unity declaration on denuclearization of Africa proposed in Political and Security Committee.

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Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar has recommended to the Security Council that the mandate of the United Nations Observer Group in Central America (ONUCA) be extended for another six months until 7 May 1991.

In a report to the Council dated 26 October, the Secretary-General said that -- pending the Council's approval -- he intended to reduce ONUCA's military observer strength from the current total of 413 to 158 observers by mid-December. The Group is now made up of 622 civilian and military personnel.

The Secretary-General reported that the operation had now reverted to its original mandate after its role in the demobilization of the members of the Nicaraguan resistance. That operation was successfully concluded by the end of June, he said, and "marked an important step forward in the process of national reconciliation in Nicaragua".

However, he had learned in September that the five Central American Governments wanted an extension of ONUCA's mandate for six months. In addition, the nature of that mandate had become widely understood in the region.

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For information media—not an official record

The Secretary-General said that ONUCA's method of operation, as it had developed during the past year, enabled it to play an important part in insuring that the five Governments comply with the security undertakings in the Esquipulas II Agreement. The aim was to maintain a regular and visible presence in those parts of the region where breaches of the undertakings would seem most likely to occur.

* * *

The sixth round of talks between the Government of El Salvador and Frente Farabundo Marti para la Liberacion Nacional (FMLN) ended today in Mexico City with an agreement between the parties to place greater emphasis on the active role of the Secretary-General's Representative as intermediary and on the confidential character of future direct meetings.

A United Nations official told correspondents at Headquarters that Alvaro de Soto, the Secretary-General's Representative on Central America, had stated that there was a consensus regarding the need to make adjustments in the mechanics followed in the negotiations so far and that agreement had been reached on specific measures for that purpose.

Mr. de Soto hoped that those measures, if coupled with the necessary flexibility and political will regarding the substance of the negotiation, would ensure that the mechanisms just adjusted would contribute to render the process more agile.

* * *

The General Assembly's Political and Security Committee concluded its debate on disarmament yesterday, hearing calls for strong United Nations support for African initiatives to implement the Declaration on denuclearization and to promote confidence-building measures in Africa.

Among the speakers expressing that view, Andrew Bangali (Sierra Leone) said the members of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) -- "contrary to South Africa's continuing nuclear and military ambitions" -- were committed to turning the continent into a nuclear-weapon-free zone.

He said that his country, itself a party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), strongly adhered to the OAU declaration on the denuclearization of Africa. He called on the five nuclear-weapon States to join the international consensus and begin taking concrete measures to eliminate nuclear weapons. In the first place, they should agree to a comprehensive test ban. Further, Mr. Bangali said, steps should be taken against the nuclear threat posed by South Africa.

Addressing the crisis in Liberia, Mr. Bangali said it was deplorable that the international community had "side-stepped the tragic situation" in that country and had given it "low priority" on its agenda.

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that the system as a whole could contribute fully to development and social progress throughout the world.

* * *

The General Assembly today elected five new members to the Security Council: Austria, Belgium, Ecuador, India and Zimbabwe. They will begin two-year terms on 1 January 1991, replacing Canada, Colombia, Ethiopia, Finland and Malaysia. The full membership of the Council will then be: the five permanent members (China, France, Soviet Union, United Kingdom and United States) and 10 non-permanent members (Austria, Belgium, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Ecuador, India, Romania, Yemen, Zaire and Zimbabwe).

Also today, the Assembly voted to reaffirm the sovereignty of the Comoros over the island of Mayotte, urging France to accelerate negotiations with the Comoros to ensure the prompt return of the island. The action was taken by a vote of 118 in favour to 1 against (France), with 30 abstentions. In the text, the Assembly also asked the Secretary-General to maintain contact with the Organization of African Unity regarding the problem.

* * *

The Social Committee today approved a draft resolution that would have the General Assembly call upon all Governments and organizations to maintain sanctions against South Africa "until the total dismantlement of the apartheid system". The text also calls for co-operation in updating the list of corporations and others continuing to do business in that country.

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United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/759
1 November 1990

THURSDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar submits report to Security Council reiterating Israel's obligations to abide by Fourth Geneva Convention and respect rights of Palestinians in occupied territories.

- Secretary-General expresses his best wishes for the humanitarian and political efforts of former Federal German Chancellor Willy Brandt regarding the situation in the Gulf.

- Annual United Nations Pledging Conference for Development Activities opens at Headquarters; Secretary-General calls for generous contributions so the UN system can fully contribute to global development and social progress.

- General Assembly elects five non-permanent members of the Security Council, and reaffirms Comoros' sovereignty over Mayotte.

- Assembly's Social Committee approves draft resolution calling for continued sanctions against South Africa until apartheid is totally dismantled.

- General Assembly's decolonization Committee concludes session; approves drafts relating to Territories under United States administration.

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The report of the Secretary-General on the occupied Arab territories was submitted to the Security Council today. He reiterated Israel's obligation to abide by international law in the occupied territories and respect the rights of the Palestinian people.

He said numerous appeals to the Israeli authorities to abide by their obligations under the 1949 Fourth Geneva Convention on the Protection of Civilians in Time of War had been ineffective. It was evident that for any measure of protection to be ensured, the co-operation of the Israeli Government was essential.

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For information media—not an official record

The Secretary-General said the Security Council might wish to call for a meeting of the high contracting parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention, including Israel, to discuss possible measures that might be taken by them under the Convention to ensure the safety and protection of the Palestinian population. He reaffirmed that the issue was a political one and said: "The determination of the Palestinians to persevere with the intifadah was evidence of their rejection of the occupation and their commitment to exercise their legitimate political rights, including self-determination."

The report was requested by the Security Council following the incident in Jerusalem on 8 October in which an estimated 21 Palestinians were killed by Israeli security forces. The document was to have been prepared on the spot by a fact-finding mission, but Israel refused to accept the United Nations team.

In the report, the Secretary-General said the message he had repeatedly received from the Palestinians was that "far more is required on the part of the international community to ensure the safety and protection of the Palestinian civilian population in the occupied territories". Israel's position, he said, continued to be that it retained exclusive control over the territories it administered. However, the Palestinians had expressed the need for an impartial presence, properly mandated by the United Nations, to provide them with a credible sense of protection. The Secretary-General said this was a matter that would have to be decided by the Security Council.

The report is currently being studied by the Council members.

* * *

Secretary-General Perez de Cuellar has expressed his best wishes for the humanitarian and political efforts of former Federal German Chancellor Willy Brandt and other European personalities regarding the situation in the Gulf. Mr. Brandt met with the Secretary-General yesterday to discuss the situation in Iraq and Kuwait, including its humanitarian aspects. He informed the Secretary-General of the invitation he had received from the President of Iraq and of his intentions to visit Baghdad next week.

* * *

Opening the 1990 United Nations Pledging Conference for Development Activities today, Secretary-General Perez de Cuellar said the international community needed to mobilize a greater proportion of its overall resources and energies for development and the creation of conditions to enable people everywhere to achieve their legitimate social and economic aspirations. He expressed hope that donor-countries would bear in mind their commitments towards the least-developed countries in announcing their contributions at the Pledging Conference. In order to fully utilize the existing capacities of the United Nations development system, he said, there was an urgent need for all Member countries to provide the system with sustained and steadily expanding resources. He urged all those taking part in the Conference to contribute generously to the various funds and programmes of the United Nations system so

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the World Food Programme has remained in the area to help with the distribution of supplies which are arriving.

The United Nations Disaster Relief Organization ceased operations in Liberia some months ago due to increasing danger. The survey mission represents an attempt to reactivate humanitarian relief operations inside the war-stricken country.

* * *

The General Assembly's Social Committee today approved a series of drafts on the elimination of racial discrimination and the right to self-determination. By one, the Assembly would call upon all States to terminate the dealings of their transnational corporations with South Africa. The Assembly would ask all concerned to contribute to the updating of a list of corporations doing business in South Africa and would call for further ratifications of the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid.

The voting was 109 in favour to 1 against (United States), with 30 abstentions. The representative of the United States said her country was firmly opposed to apartheid but the resolution was unbalanced and did not reflect recent developments in South Africa.

The Committee also approved a draft on self-determination and human rights recommending a broad range of proposals for action by the Assembly, including reaffirmation that apartheid is a "crime against humanity" and expression of alarm at the continuing assassinations and other acts by "hit squads deployed and paid by the racist regime".

The Assembly would also reaffirm the legitimacy of peoples' struggle for liberation from colonial domination, apartheid and foreign occupation by all available means including armed struggle. The Assembly was also asked to condemn Israel's expansionist activities in the Middle East as an obstacle to the Palestinians' self-determination and a threat to regional stability. Voting on this draft resolution was 104 in favour to 15 against, with 23 abstentions.

Approved without a vote were draft resolutions calling for further ratifications of the anti-racism Convention and stepped up efforts to carry out the programme for the second anti-racism Decade.

* * *

The representative of Israel, Ephraim Tari, has told the Special Political Committee that the annual report of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) was biased and unbalanced against Israel. The number of Palestinians wounded in the past year "needed confirmation", and other parts of the report were filled with "unclarities and generalities". Thus, his Government could not consider the attitude of the United Nations Agency as co-operative. Israel, he said, had

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made considerable efforts to reduce friction and help UNRWA in the fulfilment of its tasks.

The statement came as the Committee concluded its consideration of the annual report of UNRWA. Other speakers called for increased donor support to the Agency until attainment of a just and lasting solution to the question of Palestine. Some called on Israel to facilitate the implementation of a 1948 General Assembly resolution which called for Palestinian refugees to be given the choice of peaceful repatriation or compensation.

In a closing statement, Giorgio Giacomelli, the Agency's Commissioner-General, said UNRWA would continue to seek the best for the people it was helping in its area of operations. He appealed for additional support to enable the Agency to continue its humanitarian work, which was needed now more than ever.

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United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/760
2 November 1990

FRIDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- United Nations development activities are promised $1.8 billion at two-day pledging conference.

- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees announces his resignation.

- First UN convoy of the Special Relief Programme for Angola departs carrying over 300 tonnes of emergency food aid.

- Mission to resume humanitarian relief operations in Liberia completed; UNDRO special co-ordinator calls conditions in Monrovia "appalling and requiring urgent action".

- Assembly's Social Committee approves series of drafts on elimination of racial discrimination and right to self-determination.

- Assembly's Special Political Committee concludes debate on UNRWA annual report.

* * *

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Thorvald Stoltenberg, announced his resignation today to become Foreign Minister in the new Norwegian Government of Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland.

Mr. Stoltenberg told UNHCR staff today in Geneva the decision was one of the most difficult he had ever had to take, but Prime Minister Brundtland's request came at what was a critical moment for Norway. The High Commissioner expressed his full confidence in the future of the office which he has headed since the beginning of the year. He said he was convinced it was on the right track despite all the challenges that might be posed by a rapidly evolving international situation.

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For information media—not an official record

The 1990 United Nations Pledging Conference for Development Activities ended today with a total of some $1.8 billion in actual and anticipated pledges. The heads of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) announced that significant increases in contributions had been made this year in comparison to past years.

William H. Draper III, Administrator of UNDP, said that taking into account the 71 pledges made at the Conference, and conservative estimates of contributions from countries that had yet to announce their contributions, 1991 "core" resources for UNDP were expected to total $1.12 billion. The Special Purpose Funds administered by UNDP, including the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the United Nations Capital Development Fund, were expected to receive $86 million in 1991.

James P. Grant, Executive Director of UNICEF, said 61 countries had pledged some $172 million to UNICEF general resources, and an additional $268 million was expected from donors who had yet to announce their pledges, amounting to a total of over $400 million. The UNICEF also expected to receive an additional $250 million in supplementary and emergency funds.

Dr. Nafis Sadik, Executive Director of UNFPA, said 60 pledges made at the Conference, in addition to those expected at a later date, would result in a 10 per cent increase in UNFPA resources for 1991.

* * *

The first United Nations relief convoy left today for the famine-affected province of Huambo as part of the Special Relief Programme for Angola (SRPA). It is carrying over 300 tonnes of emergency food aid which will be delivered to the most vulnerable groups, including women, children and the aged, as well as others particularly affected by drought and famine.

The SRPA, which is co-ordinated by the United Nations, calls for the agreement of both parties in the ongoing conflict in Angola to the principles of safe passage and humanitarian aid, as specified in the United Nations Plan of Operations.

The next convoy is expected to leave in two weeks. This will be a cross-border convoy from Namibia into Kuando Kubango and Cunene provinces in Angola. A third convoy is planned thereafter from Luanda into Sumbe in Kwanza Sul province.

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The survey mission headed by Michael Heyn, the special co-ordinator for the United Nations emergency relief operations in Liberia, has completed its visit to the country and returned to Freetown, Sierra Leone. In New York today, a United Nations official said that in a telephone conversation, Mr. Heyn reported that his mission had found conditions in the capital, Monrovia, to be "appalling and requiring urgent action". A representative of

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the World Food Programme has remained in the area to help with the distribution of supplies which are arriving.

The United Nations Disaster Relief Organization ceased operations in Liberia some months ago due to increasing danger. The survey mission represents an attempt to reactivate humanitarian relief operations inside the war-stricken country.

* * *

The General Assembly's Social Committee today approved a series of drafts on the elimination of racial discrimination and the right to self-determination. By one, the Assembly would call upon all States to terminate the dealings of their transnational corporations with South Africa. The Assembly would ask all concerned to contribute to the updating of a list of corporations doing business in South Africa and would call for further ratifications of the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid.

The voting was 109 in favour to 1 against (United States), with 30 abstentions. The representative of the United States said her country was firmly opposed to apartheid but the resolution was unbalanced and did not reflect recent developments in South Africa.

The Committee also approved a draft on self-determination and human rights recommending a broad range of proposals for action by the Assembly, including reaffirmation that apartheid is a "crime against humanity" and expression of alarm at the continuing assassinations and other acts by "hit squads deployed and paid by the racist regime".

The Assembly would also reaffirm the legitimacy of peoples' struggle for liberation from colonial domination, apartheid and foreign occupation by all available means including armed struggle. The Assembly was also asked to condemn Israel's expansionist activities in the Middle East as an obstacle to the Palestinians' self-determination and a threat to regional stability. Voting on this draft resolution was 104 in favour to 15 against, with 23 abstentions.

Approved without a vote were draft resolutions calling for further ratifications of the anti-racism Convention and stepped up efforts to carry out the programme for the second anti-racism Decade.

* * *

The representative of Israel, Ephraim Tari, has told the Special Political Committee that the annual report of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) was biased and unbalanced against Israel. The number of Palestinians wounded in the past year "needed confirmation", and other parts of the report were filled with "unclarities and generalities". Thus, his Government could not consider the attitude of the United Nations Agency as co-operative. Israel, he said, had

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made considerable efforts to reduce friction and help UNRWA in the fulfilment of its tasks.

The statement came as the Committee concluded its consideration of the annual report of UNRWA. Other speakers called for increased donor support to the Agency until attainment of a just and lasting solution to the question of Palestine. Some called on Israel to facilitate the implementation of a 1948 General Assembly resolution which called for Palestinian refugees to be given the choice of peaceful repatriation or compensation.

In a closing statement, Giorgio Giacomelli, the Agency's Commissioner-General, said UNRWA would continue to seek the best for the people it was helping in its area of operations. He appealed for additional support to enable the Agency to continue its humanitarian work, which was needed now more than ever.

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United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/761
5 November 1990

MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Security Council extends mandate of United Nations Observer Group in Central America for another six months until 7 May 1991.

- Lebanon complains of Israeli air attack of village in Western Bekaa on 1 November, killing three and wounding several.

- Germany announces special contribution of some $1.3 million to UNRWA emergency programme in Lebanon, West Bank and Gaza; Netherlands, Luxembourg and two Soviet non-governmental organizations also make donations.

- Personal Representative of Secretary-General on Afghanistan and Pakistan meets with Presidents of those two countries, as well as with Afghan resistance leaders and other political leaders.

- Under-Secretary-General for Public Information reports on increased activities in Department in response to global political changes and new impetus given to United Nations.

- Proposal to establish United Nations Information Centre in Namibia is heard in Administrative and Budgetary Committee.

* * *

The Security Council today decided unanimously to extend the mandate of the United Nations Observer Group in Central America (ONUCA) for another period of six months until 7 May, next year.

The ONUCA is observing and reporting on the five Central American Governments' fulfilment of their security commitments under the Esquipulas II Agreement.

By adopting resolution 675 (1990), the Council also decided to continue to monitor expenditures carefully during the period, and to ask the

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For information media—not an official record

Secretary-General to keep it fully informed of further developments and to report on all aspects of ONUCA's operations before expiry of the new mandate period.

* * *

The Government of Lebanon has complained of an Israeli air attack on 1 November on a village in the Western Bekaa in which three Lebanese died and a number of people were wounded. The bombardment had also destroyed three buildings and inflicted heavy damage on over 20 houses.

In a letter to the Secretary-General, the Permanent Representative of Lebanon, Kahalil Makkawi, said it was the sixteenth act of aggression committed by Israel against his country this year.

* * *

The Government of Germany has announced a special contribution of $1,282,000 in answer to a recent appeal from Giorgio Giacomelli, Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), for funds to rescue the Agency's emergency programme in Lebanon, the West Bank and Gaza.

Germany has also pledged this year to provide some $1.6 million for social services at Aqabat Jabr camp in the West Bank, almost $2 million for two major sanitation projects in the West Bank and Syria, and about $270,000 for a women's programme centre in Amari camp, West Bank.

These pledges are in addition to Germany's regular contribution for 1990 of some $6.3 million.

The UNRWA was advised that the German Government had made those pledges following its 19 October declaration that German reunification would not be effected at the expense of foreign aid.

Other pledges made in answer to the Commissioner-General's appeal have come from the Netherlands with about $565,000 and Luxembourg with some $43,000. The Soviet Peace Fund and the Soviet Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee also made pledges of in-kind contributions.

In a letter to 36 Ambassadors, the Commissioner-General had stated that the Agency urgently needed additional funds to continue its indispensable assistance to Palestine refugees until the end of this year.

* * *

It was announced at Headquarters today that Benon Sevan, the Personal Representative of the Secretary-General in Afghanistan and Pakistan, met on Saturday with the President of Pakistan, Ghulam Ishaq Khan. He met earlier in Kabul with the President of Afghanistan, Mr. Najibullah.

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Mr. Sevan is returning to New York tomorrow to brief the Secretary-General after a series of intensive consultations with Afghan resistance leaders and commanders as well as other political leaders.

* * *

The Special Political Committee this morning began its consideration of questions relating to information, hearing a statement by the Under-Secretary-General for Public Information, Thérèse P. Sévigny.

Reporting on the activities of the Department of Public Information (DPI) over the past year, Mrs. Sévigny said global political changes had given new impetus to the United Nations and there was increased demand for DPI products and services. She said that as a sign of increased interest in the Organization, 2,000 journalists had this year been accredited for coverage of the General Assembly general debate.

Despite a 15 per cent cut in staffing over the past three years, DPI had tripled publications production and increased radio and television output by 20 per cent, she said. The Department had also responded swiftly in providing information support concerning the Iraq-Kuwait crisis.

* * *

The Administrative and Budgetary Committee today continued its review of major programmes in the medium-term plan for 1992-1997 including the budget sections relating to Namibia. During its debate yesterday, the Committee heard a proposal to establish a United Nations Information Centre in Namibia.

K.D. Dwanka (Ghana) said in that connection that centres in developed countries had been established with the provision of certain facilities by host countries, but why could not the Secretariat provide adequate means without placing any burden on Namibia for opening a centre there?

Today, the Committee heard a statement by Zebulon Kandjoze (Namibia), who welcomed the proposal for the establishment of a United Nations Information Centre in his country. He emphasized that ongoing programmes in Namibia, such as the Nationhood Programme and the individual scholarships programme, should continue. Funds from the regular budget must be made available for students to finish their studies, return to Namibia and help the country develop. The $1.5 million which had been made available in previous years should again be extended to Namibia, he said, adding that voluntary contributions were also needed.

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United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/762
6 November 1990

TUESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees deplores upsurge of violence in Gaza Strip over the weekend. Observer for Palestine calls for swift Security Council action to protect Palestinians in occupied territories.

- National economy in Lebanon has deteriorated further, according to situation report issued by United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator.

- Speakers in General Assembly's Social Committee welcome entry into force on Sunday of Convention against Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances.

- Secretary-General appoints Special Co-ordinator for Emergency and Relief Operations in Angola.

* * *

According to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), one Palestinian was killed and more than 300 were wounded by the Israeli Army during violent confrontations in the Gaza Strip over the weekend. A statement from UNRWA said these were the fiercest confrontations in Gaza since 20 May this year, when clashes erupted following the killing of seven Gazan workers in Israel.

The Agency said rioting was triggered by rumours that a Palestinian detainee from Beit Hanoun had been killed in his Gaza prison cell. The Israeli authorities claimed that he had committed suicide. Clashes spread out from Beit Hanoun to other refugee camps and were particularly violent in Jabalia and Rafah camps.

In the statement, issued yesterday at its Vienna headquarters, UNRWA said it deplored the strong measures used by the Israeli authorities to control demonstrations. "Such measures seem more likely to contribute to the violence rather than to quell it", the statement said.

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For information media—not an official record

Meanwhile, the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, meeting in New York, yesterday heard the observer for Palestine call for swift Security Council action to protect Palestinians in the occupied territories.

The observer, M. Nasser-Al-Kidwa, referring to renewed violence by the Israeli security forces during the weekend, said those forces were engaged in a systematic campaign of terror in the Gaza Strip, which was the result of a "deliberate long-range policy". In the space of 48 hours that policy had given rise to some 700 casualties, he said.

Mr. Al-Kidwa noted that the Security Council resolutions calling on the Secretary-General to send a mission to the region and subsequently deploring Israel's refusal to receive that mission had met with flat Israeli rejection. However, the Committee now had before it the Secretary-General's report on ways to protect the Palestinian population in the occupied territories. That report would provide the Security Council with a useful basis for its examination of the situation in that area with a view to providing for the inhabitants.

He said any draft resolution put before the Security Council should include proposals for deployment of a United Nations observer force to the region to guarantee Palestinians a minimum level of protection.

* * *

The national economy in Lebanon has deteriorated further, according to a report from the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator (UNDRO), describing the general situation in that country.

The report said instability in greater Beirut and in areas of southern Lebanon, which had been aggravated by the Gulf crisis, had had "grave social consequences", and that over one third of the population now had to be assisted by food aid and basic medical care.

* * *

The entry into force, on Sunday, of the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances was welcomed by many speakers as the Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Committee today continued its debate on international action for drug-abuse control.

They said the Convention, adopted in 1988, was a comprehensive instrument for international legal co-operation at every level of the fight against drug trafficking. It included provisions for the apprehension of traffickers, seizure of assets obtained through drug trafficking and control of precursor chemicals.

At a United Nations press briefing on Friday, Margaret J. Anstee, Director-General of the United Nations Office at Vienna and Co-ordinator for United Nations Drug-Related Activities, said the early entry into force of the

Convention indicated the importance attached to it by the international community.

She said the wide-ranging and comprehensive Convention, which was designed to counter the threat of global drug trafficking organizations, went further than existing agreements and "hit drug traffickers where they hurt the most: in their pockets and their liberty".

* * *

Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar has appointed Otto Essien of Nigeria as Special Co-ordinator for Emergency and Relief Operations in Angola. These duties are in addition to his current responsibilities as United Nations Resident Co-ordinator and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Resident Representative in Angola.

The Special Co-ordinator will assume full responsibility for the direction and management of the Special Relief Programme for Angola. As previously announced, arrangements have been concluded on a United Nations Plan of Operations to move urgently needed humanitarian supplies to drought and war-induced famine areas in Angola.

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United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/763
7 November 1990

WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Security Council continues consideration of situation in occupied territories.

- General Assembly calls for achievement of comprehensive political solution to Afghanistan conflict and for creation of conditions enabling return of refugees voluntarily.

- United Nations Secretariat team to visit Cyprus from 12 to 21 November to review Peace-keeping Force in that country.

- Day of Solidarity for detained United Nations staff observed at Headquarters.

* * *

The Security Council met this afternoon to discuss the safety and protection of Palestinian civilians in the occupied territories.

Addressing the Council, the observer for Palestine, Nasser Al-Kidwa, said "What we really want ... is for the Council to form an armed international emergency force to be dispatched to the occupied territories to replace the Israeli occupation forces". However, given political realities in the Council, he was asking for an international observer force to monitor Israel's compliance with the Fourth Geneva Convention and Council resolutions. He reaffirmed Palestine's readiness for the immediate holding of the Middle East peace conference under United Nations auspices should the United States and Israel drop their opposition to the conference.

In his statement to the Council, the representative of Israel, Yoram Aridor, said the Geneva Convention did not apply to territories which had been illegally occupied by Jordan when Israel entered them. The call for a meeting of high contracting parties was an "astonishing" singling out of Israel. The international community had never seen fit to convene the signatories with regard to: "Syria, the slaughterer of up to 30,000 of its own citizens in Hama... Iraq, the holder of 300,000 foreign hostages... the killer of 5,000 Kurds with poisonous gas... Jordan, the killer of 3,400 Palestinians in Black

(more)

For information media—not an official record

September... Algeria, the killer of 500 in a single day of bread riots... Yemen, the killer of 13,000 in two weeks... Sudan, the killer of hundreds of thousands, the enslaver of black Africans... Mauritania, which holds 10 per cent of its population as slaves... [or] Libya, the paymaster of Semtex terrorism".

Statements in reply to Israel were made by the representatives of Yemen and Iraq, and by the observer for Palestine.

The Council will resume the discussion at a time and date to be fixed in consultations.

* * *

The General Assembly today called for a comprehensive political solution to the conflict in Afghanistan.

The text of the consensus resolution called on all parties concerned to create conditions that would enable the Afghan refugees to return voluntarily to their homeland in safety and honour, and to promote a political settlement acceptable to the Afghan people. The text further stressed the need for "an early start of the intra-Afghan dialogue for the establishment, through democratic procedures acceptable to the Afghan people, including free and fair elections, of a broad-based government".

Yesterday, the Administrative and Budgetary Committee approved the programme budget implications of that resolution, which would mean an estimated non-recurrent appropriation of some $6 million for the 1990-1991 programme budget.

In other actions this morning, the Assembly adopted without a vote a resolution calling for continued co-operation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and another stressing the importance of national and international efforts towards the implementation of the 1984 Declaration on the Right of Peoples to Peace.

* * *

The Secretary-General's Spokesman announced today that a Secretariat team would visit Cyprus from 12 to 21 November at the request of Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar in order to carry out a review of the organization and operations of UNFICYP -- the United Nations Peace-keeping Force in that country.

The team would be led by Gustave Feissel and would include the deputy Military Adviser to the Secretary-General, Lt. Colonel Dermot Earley.

The third such review since the Force's establishment in 1964, according to the announcement, would be undertaken in close co-operation with the Secretary-General's Special Representative on Cyprus, Oscar Camilión, and the

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Force Commander of UNFICYP. Previous missions visited Cyprus in 1969 and 1980.

Also, the Under-Secretary-General for Special Political Affairs, who is in charge of United Nations peace-keeping operations, Marrack Goulding, will accompany the team at the beginning of its mission to launch its work. He is expected to leave Cyprus on 15 November.

* * *

The first "Day of Solidarity", dedicated to the security and independence of the international civil service, was observed today at Headquarters with a minute of silence at 12:30 p.m. All staff unions and associations in the United Nations system were asked to observe the Day, called for by the Staff Committee of the New York Union, to highlight the plight of scores of United Nations staff members.

Staff Committee President Lowell Flanders has said: "Many of these colleagues are in detention, several have been killed, others have been abducted or are otherwise unaccounted for... we must intensify our actions to stop this outrage."

An exhibit in the General Assembly Lobby, organized by the United Nations Staff Union and the Centre for Human Rights, graphically portrays the victims, and the continuing threats, facing United Nations staff world-wide.

Opening the exhibit today, Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar reiterated his commitment to promote the protection and safety of United Nations staff members as they carry out their duties around the world.

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United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/764
8 November 1990

THURSDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Secretary-General appeals urgently for international support to United Nations Special Relief Programme for Angola to help 1.9 million people threatened by starvation as result of drought and civil war.

- Calls for sustained international assistance to Palestinian people heard in Economic and Financial Committee.

- Secretary-General renews appeal to both communities in Cyprus to fully co-operate with him in his good offices effort.

- UNDRO information meeting in Geneva is told of possible new wave of evacuees from Kuwait into Jordan.

* * *

The spokesman for the Secretary-General announced today that Mr. Perez de Cuellar had issued an urgent appeal for international assistance to enable the United Nations system to launch a Special Relief Programme for Angola to alleviate the acute suffering of 1.9 million people who are under serious threat of starvation as a result of widespread famine induced by prolonged drought and civil war.

According to the announcement, the total amount of the appeal -- to meet only the most urgent needs of the targeted population over a six-month period -- is approximately $104 million. Of that amount, just over $76 million is required for food aid, transport and logistic costs and $22.5 million is needed for essential non-food supplies.

It is expected that the food assistance will continue until the harvest in 1992. In the meantime, a further appeal for a second phase of the Special Relief Programme will be made in early 1991 to meet the continuing needs.

The first relief convoy left for the famine-stricken areas last Friday as a result of a mutual agreement reached a month ago between the Government and the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) to extend humanitarian assistance to all civilians in need.

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For information media—not an official record

* * *

Calls for sustained international assistance to the Palestinian people were heard yesterday in the General Assembly's Economic and Financial Committee.

In a draft resolution, approved by a vote of 125 in favour to 2 against (Israel and United States), the Committee recommended that the Assembly urge the international community and the United Nations system to sustain the assistance to Palestinians in close co-operation with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO).

The draft also recommended the immediate lifting of Israeli restrictions hindering the implementation of United Nations projects providing economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people in the occupied territories.

* * *

The Secretary-General has renewed his appeal to the parties in Cyprus to lend him their full co-operation in his mission of good offices.

In a report to the Security Council, dated 7 November (S/21932), he said that during the past four months, the negative atmosphere to which he had referred in his last report of 12 July, had persisted.

The Secretary-General called on both sides to avoid taking any action or making any public statement on the question that could further complicate his diplomatic efforts to bring about a peaceful solution.

* * *

A new influx of third country nationals from Kuwait into Jordan in the near future is a real possibility according to a statement made by a Jordanian representative at an information meeting on the crisis relating to Iraq and Kuwait. The meeting was held by the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator (UNDRO) yesterday in Geneva.

In a press communiqué made available at Headquarters today, UNDRO said the Jordanian representative had informed delegates at the meeting that Iraqi authorities had asked all foreigners still in Kuwait to leave within the coming weeks. An influx of over 40,000 evacuees through Jordan was therefore to be anticipated in the near future.

The meeting focused on two major issues, according to the communiqué: the reimbursement of the expenses of approximately $50 million incurred by the Jordanian Government in repatriating over 700,000 foreign nationals, and the prepositioning of funds and supplies in the event of a further mass exodus.

The Director in UNDRO and Deputy to the Disaster Relief Co-ordinator, F. Mayrhofer-Grunbuhel, told the meeting that the replenishment of Jordanian resources, which had been used in a "purely humanitarian context", was a pre-condition for facing a possible new wave of displaced people and as such an investment in the future.

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United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/765
9 November 1990

FRIDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Security Council views videotape of 8 October violence at Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem.

- General Committee decides not to act on Iraqi request for new Assembly item on "United States military concentrations" in Gulf.

- President of Security Council reiterate its full support to Secretary-General's current efforts for negotiated settlement of Cyprus problem.

- Secretary-General to leave New York over the weekend to visit Japan and France.

- Economic and Social Council ends work for 1990 hearing appeal from Executive Director of UNEP for sustained, co-operative action on environment.

- Economic and Financial Committee is informed about findings of mission sent in September to areas affected by Chernobyl nuclear accident.

* * *

The Security Council this morning watched a bystander's videotape of the violent clashes that took place in Jerusalem last month, submitted by the observer for Palestine as evidence that the shooting of Arab worshippers by Israeli police at the Al-Aqsa Mosque had been unprovoked.

The Palestine observer, Nasser Al-Kidwa, said the calls of the muezzin heard over loudspeakers in the background consisted entirely of calls for the police to stop shooting and allow ambulances into the area, and for worshippers to care for the wounded and remove themselves from areas where they would be exposed to gunfire.

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For information media—not an official record

On that basis, he rejected the allegation in the report of Israel's official Commission of Investigation that the crowd had been exhorted to "slaughter the Jews!" He called that allegation "an unprecedented moral and political low point" in the proceedings of the Council.

The Council will discuss the subject further at a time and date to be announced.

* * *

The General Committee decided this morning to take no action on Iraq's request that the General Assembly take up the threat posed to peace and security by United States military concentrations in the Arabian Gulf.

The 29-member Committee (comprising the Assembly's President and Vice-Presidents and the Chairmen of its seven Main Committees) first heard Iraq base its request on the grounds that the United States was engaged in an aggressive campaign against it, thwarting peace initiatives and seeking to control the oil sources in the Gulf region. It then heard Kuwait and Saudi Arabia stress that it was Iraq's actions -- and not those of the United States or other countries that had sent troops to the Gulf -- which were imperiling regional and international peace and security.

The representatives of the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, the United States, Senegal, Czechoslovakia, France and Honduras all spoke against the inclusion of the item, stressing that the presence of foreign forces in the Gulf region was fully authorized by the Charter provisions concerning collective self-defence. The Committee then accepted Canada's motion that no action be taken.

* * *

The members of the Security Council met today in consultations to consider the Secretary-General's report on his mission of good offices in Cyprus.

Through a statement issued by the President of the Council, they reiterated their full support for the Secretary-General's current efforts and reaffirmed their endorsement of his plan of action to complete an outline of an overall agreement.

They also stressed the "urgent need" to arrive at a negotiated settlement of the Cyprus problem and called for renewed political will and commitment by all parties to facilitate a process of negotiations.

They requested the Secretary-General to report to the Council by 15 February on the outcome of his effort to arrive at an agreed outline of an overall agreement and to provide the Council with his assessment of the situation at that time.

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Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar will leave New York over the weekend of 10 November for Tokyo to attend, at the invitation of the Government of Japan, the Ceremonies of Accession for Emperor Akihito at the State Hall Imperial Palace scheduled for Monday, 12 November. During his stay in Tokyo, the Secretary-General will have the opportunity to meet with a number of other visiting officials.

Mr. Perez de Cuellar will depart Japan for Paris on Thursday, 15 November. On Saturday, 17 November, he will preside over an informal meeting of eminent persons on the economic consequences of the Gulf crisis. The meeting will take place at the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) headquarters.

On Monday, 19 November, the Secretary-General will attend the signing ceremony of the Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe. President François Mitterrand of France will then open the Meeting of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE), at which the Secretary-General will speak.

Mr. Perez de Cuellar is expected back in New York on Tuesday, 20 November.

* * *

The Economic and Social Council today concluded its work for the year, hearing an appeal from the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Mostafa K. Tolba, for a strong message to the General Assembly calling for co-operative action in the area of the environment.

The Second World Climate Conference had just ended in Geneva, setting the tone for the negotiations on climate change, scheduled to start in February 1991, said Mr. Tolba. Before the 1992 Conference on Environment and Development, the task before its secretariat, UNEP and other members of the United Nations system was to find meaningful agreements on financial resources, technology transfer and better environmental economics. He appealed to the Council to strengthen its commitment to those goals.

* * *

The General Assembly's Economic and Financial Committee has concluded its debate on international co-operation to mitigate the consequences of the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant.

Addressing the Committee, Gerald Hinteregger, Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), informed delegates of the findings of the United Nations mission sent late September to the areas of the Soviet Union affected by the accident.

In his capacity as the leader of the mission, Mr. Hinteregger told the Committee that there was general agreement that the Chernobyl nuclear accident was of unprecedented dimensions and could not be viewed as the problem of just one nation.

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He said initial efforts in dealing with the accident had focused on scientific and technical problems, rather than informing the public about radiation contamination and its potential health effects.

That had resulted in anxiety and stress, and a lack of confidence in official pronouncements. To resolve those problems it was strongly advocated that a scientifically justified concept for safe living in the contaminated areas be elaborated as a matter of urgency.

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United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/766
12 November 1990

MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Secretary-General expresses irritation by press reports concerning his prospective choice as new High Commissioner for Refugees who, he says, is "eminently qualified" to discharge those functions.

- Secretary-General discusses world issues with United States Vice-President; holds talks with French, Jordanian, Israeli and Syrian leaders on situation in Gulf among other things.

- Secretary-General states his intention to establish "as soon as developments permit" small preparatory office for United Nations verification mission in El Salvador to monitor elections in the country.

- United Nations presence to be re-established in Monrovia to resume relief operations.

- Political and Security Committee recommends negotiations on convention against use or threatened use of nuclear weapons.

- Proposal to establish United Nations special co-ordinator for electoral services to interested States is heard in Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Committee.

* * *

In a statement made through his spokeswoman, Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar said today that he was "pained and profoundly irritated" by press reports concerning his prospective choice as the new High Commissioner for Refugees, Virendra Dayal, his Chef de Cabinet.

In that connection, the Secretary-General was also disturbed by allegations of "cronyism" and the insinuation that he had not been consulting Member States. Those allegations had surfaced at a time when he was actively engaged in a process of such consultations.

Mr. Perez de Cuellar said he was taken by surprise by the sudden resignation of Torvald Stoltenberg as High Commissioner for Refugees and that

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For information media—not an official record

he felt a number of criteria must be met by whoever assumed the post. First, the candidate should be sufficiently qualified in refugee matters so that he or she might assume the functions immediately without having to learn the job. Secondly, the candidate's independence and integrity should be beyond question. Thirdly, the candidate must be committed to fulfil the three-year term of office.

The Secretary-General said that, with respect to Mr. Dayal himself, while he was neither a Western European nor an "available" national politician with ambitions in the international field, he was, in Mr. Perez de Cuellar's opinion, eminently qualified to discharge the functions of High Commissioner with competence and integrity.

Quite apart from his extremely responsible present position within the United Nations, Mr. Dayal had held, for 14 years, a senior position in the office of the High Commissioner. The Secretary-General said it should be mentioned for the record that Mr. Dayal had, on this and on a previous occasion, declined his suggestion that he be considered for the post of High Commissioner.

On the most recent occasion, Mr. Perez de Cuellar had approached a senior Nordic official from within the system who, after consulting with his Government, also declined the Secretary-General's offer. It was only then that Mr. Dayal agreed, in the interest of the effective continuation of the work of the High Commissioner, that his name be considered.

Mr. Perez de Cuellar said he would continue to be in close contact with all concerned, in an effort to ensure that the direction of this vital international agency was resumed as expeditiously and effectively as possible. Names of candidates from six Western countries -- Canada, the United Kingdom, France, Austria, Norway and New Zealand -- had thus far been put forward.

In reply to questions by correspondents, the spokeswoman said the High Commissioner was to be elected by the General Assembly on the nomination of the Secretary-General. The terms of appointment of the High Commissioner were to be proposed by the Secretary-General and approved by the General Assembly. The High Commissioner was to be elected for a term of three years from 1 January.

* * *

The Secretary-General arrived in Tokyo yesterday where he attended the ceremonies in connection with the enthronement today of Emperor Akihito.

Mr. Perez de Cuellar travelled from Washington D.C. to Tokyo as guest of Vice-President Dan Quayle of the United States onboard a United States Government aircraft. During the journey, the Secretary-General and the Vice-President exchanged views on a wide range of matters of mutual interest -- Iraq/Kuwait, the occupied territories, El Salvador, human rights in Cuba, United Nations finances, Cambodia, Afghanistan, Cyprus, financing of the

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United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM), Haiti and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). With regard to the latter, they had a very useful conversation, with which both sides were very satisfied.

In Tokyo today, the Secretary-General met with the Prime Minister of France, Michel Rocard. They discussed the situation in the Persian Gulf, as well as Cambodia and UNHCR. The Secretary-General then met with Crown Prince Hassan of Jordan, with whom he discussed the situation in the Gulf area and the occupied territories.

The Secretary-General then attended the ceremony of enthronement of the Emperor at the Imperial Palace.

In the afternoon, the Secretary-General had a bilateral meeting with the President of Israel, Chaim Herzog; they discussed the situation in the Persian Gulf and the occupied territories. The Secretary-General later met with Vice-President Abdul Halim Khaddam of Syria; their talks dealt with the situation in the Gulf, the occupied territories and Lebanon.

* * *

The Secretary-General intends to establish shortly a small preparatory office for the United Nations verification mission in El Salvador to monitor elections in the country "as soon as developments permit".

In a report to the Security Council dated 8 November (S/21931) on the situation in Central America, the Secretary-General said the initial intention was to await a halt to the armed conflict in El Salvador. However, the parties had now agreed that the mission need not await the fulfilment of that condition.

The United Nations mission, which is to last for one year, is to be given powers to take whatever legally permissible action it may deem appropriate for promoting and protecting human rights. The agreement on human rights was the first substantive achievement of the negotiating process in two substantive rounds of negotiations held in Mexico and Costa Rica in June and July, respectively.

The two other initial objectives of the United Nations mission were to carry out a certain number of tasks relating to the verification of a cease-fire and the monitoring of the electoral process.

* * *

Following the visit of a United Nations Security Survey Mission to Liberia from 27 October to 1 November, it has been decided to re-establish a United Nations presence in Monrovia and to resume relief operations in that area forthwith.

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According to an announcement issued at Headquarters today, the Survey Mission found that security conditions in approximately half of the city of Monrovia permit the resumption of relief operations.

It reported that the condition of people in Monrovia was extremely grave, with widespread starvation and rampaging disease, especially among young children. Malaria, respiratory infections and diarrhoeal disease were prevalent in the total absence of medical and sanitary facilities.

The relief operation will be led by the United Nations Special Co-ordinator of Emergency Relief Operations for Liberia, Michael Heyn, and will have its logistics support base in Freetown, Sierra Leone.

* * *

The General Assembly would request the Conference on Disarmament to begin negotiations on an international convention prohibiting the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, under the provisions of a draft resolution approved this morning in the Political and Security Committee.

Among other drafts approved today was one by which the Assembly would urge the Soviet Union and the United States to reach agreement on an immediate nuclear-arms freeze, and would call upon all nuclear-weapon States to agree to a comprehensive nuclear freeze.

On Friday the Committee approved 13 draft resolutions, including one calling for the designation of the 1990s as the third disarmament decade.

* * *

The Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Committee today heard a proposal by the United States that the United Nations consolidate its electoral assistance to interested countries by establishing a special co-ordinator for electoral services, assisted by a commission made up of experts from around the world.

Addressing the Committee, the United States representative, Thomas Pickering, said the electoral assistance of the Organization had been very successful in many countries, but was largely improvised rather than systematic. Referring to President Bush's proposal on the subject in the General Assembly's general debate, he suggested that member countries should reach agreement on administrative approaches to make electoral assistance available on a case-by-case basis. He emphasized, however, that the United States understood there was no single electoral method equally suited to all nations. Each member of the international community must respect the decisions taken by other States in developing their electoral institutions.

The Committee also heard a proposal by the representative of Cuba to change the wording of a text on the right to own property, submitted last week by the United States. The amendment would emphasize the rights of peoples to choose their own political, social, economic and cultural system.

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United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/767
13 November 1990

TUESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- United Nations official informs correspondents that Secretary-General has received letter from his Chef de Cabinet, asking that his name be withdrawn from consideration as next United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

- Secretary-General holds talks with Japanese leaders on Cambodia, situation in Gulf and Japan's contributions to United Nations operations; meets also with Presidents of Pakistan and Cyprus.

- Intergovernmental Group requests Assembly to appeal to States for strict enforcement of oil embargo against South Africa.

- Economic and Financial Committee hears calls for early agreement on framework convention on climate change.

- Third Committee approves drafts on advancement of women.

* * *

The Spokesman for the Secretary-General told correspondents today that Mr. Perez de Cuellar, while in Japan, had received a letter from his Chef de Cabinet, Virendra Dayal, asking that his name be withdrawn from consideration as the next United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. The Secretary-General had acceded "with the greatest of regret" to Mr. Dayal's wish, the Spokesman said.

In the letter, the text of which was made available at Headquarters, Mr. Dayal stated that "given the present controversy as to whether a non-European could be worthy of the post, which I find demeaning, I would appreciate it if my name could be withdrawn from consideration".

* * *

Today, on the third day of his visit to Tokyo, the Secretary-General held a meeting with the Foreign Minister of Japan, Taro Nakayama. The subjects covered were the Persian Gulf, Cambodia and Japan's contribution to the

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operations of the United Nations. The Secretary-General then called on the Prime Minister of Japan, Toshiki Kaifu, with whom he held a similar discussion.

Mr. Perez de Cuellar then met with the President of Pakistan, Ghulam Ishaq Khan, with whom he discussed the Persian Gulf and, in particular, the economic fall-out for countries affected by the situation there; Afghanistan; and the question of Palestine. The Secretary-General then held a meeting with the President of Cyprus, George Vassiliou.

* * *

The Intergovernmental Group which monitors compliance with the oil embargo against South Africa today adopted a report which would have the General Assembly appeal to Member States to adhere strictly to the embargo and to co-operate fully with the Group.

Known formally as the Intergovernmental Group to Monitor the Supply and Shipping of Oil and Petroleum Products to South Africa, it said in its report that the most effective way of enforcing the embargo remained the Security Council's option of invoking Chapter VII of the Charter. Such a measure, it stated, would assist oil-exporting, oil-shipping and oil-handling States that had enacted an oil embargo or comparable policies against South Africa to ensure their effective implementation.

Addressing the meeting, Nabeela Al-Mulla of Kuwait, Vice-Chairman of the Intergovernmental Group and Chairman of its drafting group, said the tonnage of oil and petroleum products in the cases of alleged violation of the oil embargo had been rising, with the figures for the last two years totalling 20 million tons.

The Chairman of the Group, Anthony B. Nyakyi of the United Republic of Tanzania, said Governments could enforce the embargo by forbidding tankers from misrepresenting their intended destination. They could also exert pressure on ship owners to account for the whereabouts of ships which disappeared for long periods without explanation.

He said the Group could not escape the conclusion that some of the ships involved in port calls had carried and delivered merchandise or products covered by the oil embargo. In the absence of conclusive proof, however, the Group had had to give Governments involved the benefit of the doubt. He renewed the Group's appeal to unco-operative Governments to reconsider their position.

* * *

As the General Assembly's Economic and Financial Committee took up environment-related issues, speakers said the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development must produce concrete results, such as an agreement on a framework convention on climate change.

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Several speakers stated that while industrialized and developing countries shared a common responsibility for environmental problems, it was the developed nations which were largely responsible for major problems and which also had the resources needed for effective action.

The Secretary-General of the 1992 Conference, Maurice Strong, said that of all the environmental issues facing the world today, climate change was the principal one. He called for greater resources for the Conference to finance research and staff costs.

The Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, Mostafa K. Tolba, said that in the past year grass-roots support for environmental action had broadened and strengthened. He emphasized that the price tag to halt pollution and lay the foundation for sustainable development would run into hundreds of billions of dollars.

The representative of Malaysia expressed strong concern over specific trends in environmental activism, including campaigns in defence of tropical rain forests which he said were not well-founded and had caused some developed countries to adopt policies that were injurious to tropical timber interests.

* * *

The General Assembly would call for a wide range of actions to implement the Strategies for the advancement of women that were adopted in Nairobi in 1985 under one of six draft resolutions approved this afternoon by the Third Committee (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural), all without a vote.

The other texts deal with the status of women in the United Nations Secretariat, female literacy, women in public life, the elimination of discrimination against women and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM).

The text on the Nairobi Strategies calls on States to give priority to programmes relating particularly to literacy, the empowerment of rural women, women's role in economic and political decision-making, population, environment and information and asks the Commission on the Status of Women to begin preparations to hold a World Conference on Women in 1995.

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United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/768
14 November 1990

WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Secretary-General to depart from Japan for Paris where he will preside over meeting of eminent persons to discuss effects of Gulf crisis on world economy.

- Senior United Nations officials review emergency programmes for southern Africa.

- According to latest status of contributions reports, some $594 million is presently owed to United Nations regular budget.

- Host Country Relations Committee hears complaint of hostile demonstrations at Cuban Mission.

* * *

On the eve of his departure from Japan, Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar met in Tokyo with the President of Portugal, Mario Alberto Nobre Lopes Soares. During the course of the day, the Secretary-General also conferred with the heads of representative offices in Tokyo of various United Nations agencies and programmes.

Tomorrow, 15 November, at about noon local time, the Secretary-General will leave Tokyo for Paris, where he will arrive in the early evening.

On Saturday, 17 November, he will preside over an informal meeting of eminent persons on the economic consequences of the Gulf crisis.

* * *

A United Nations-sponsored meeting to review the emergency situation in southern Africa concluded its discussions in Harare, Zimbabwe, yesterday on additional measures to ensure an adequate response to the humanitarian needs of the affected populations.

The meeting, which took place on 12 and 13 November, was attended by senior agency officials and field representatives of the United Nations

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system. Discussions centred on the plight of over 2 million refugees and displaced persons who have become the victims of civil conflict in Angola and Mozambique.

Current relief operations were reviewed with the purpose of strengthening and expanding United Nations relief efforts in the two countries and of assessing the needs of large numbers of people who have fled their homes and sought refuge in neighbouring States.

In an opening address, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Zimbabwe, Nathan Shamuyarira, noted that the prospects for peace in the region had improved in recent months; however, the region suffered from serious humanitarian problems and resulting economic difficulties.

The consultative meeting was convened under the chairmanship of Abdulrahim A. Farah, Under-Secretary-General for Special Political Questions, Regional Co-operation, Decolonization and Trusteeship. Participants included, among others, the Special Co-ordinators for Emergencies of Angola and Mozambique, United Nations Resident Co-ordinators of Malawi, Namibia, Zaire, Zambia and Zimbabwe, and headquarters and field representatives from the World Food Programme, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the World Health Organization and the United Nations Development Programme.

The Plan of Operations for the Special Relief Programme for Angola (SRPA), which is co-ordinated by the United Nations, represents arrangements agreed to by the Government of Angola and the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) for facilitating the safe passage of United Nations relief convoys to areas where large numbers of displaced and other needy persons face starvation as a result of famine induced by war and drought. The first relief convoy took place on 2 November 1990; other convoys, as well as airlifts, maritime shipments and rail transport are being planned. In the meantime, the Secretary-General has issued an urgent appeal for international assistance amounting to approximately $102 million.

The emergency situation in Mozambique reflects the accumulated impact of natural and man-made disasters which have severely disrupted the national economy and led to massive displacements of people within and across national boundaries. The presence of over 1 million Mozambican refugees in the neighbouring countries poses serious problems for the host Governments, in particular Malawi, where there are at present over 820,000, and that number is increasing monthly.

The meeting considered it important that emergency relief measures be formulated also in the context of national rehabilitation and development. Participants recognized the urgent need to develop contingency plans to ensure the orderly return of refugees and displaced persons to their homes when conditions in Mozambique so permit.

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According to the latest report on the status of contributions to the regular budget of the Organization, dated 1 November, collections had risen from $647 million to $694.4 million as of the end of October and the number of States that had paid in full for this year and all prior years was now 63.

The total outstanding amount was currently some $594 million, of which the United States owes almost $482 million.

The amount owed to six peace-keeping operations, financed on an assessed basis, had dropped from $430.9 million at the end of September to $403.7 million at the end of October, according to the report.

* * *

The Committee on Relations with the Host Country today adopted its report to the General Assembly, in which it expressed hope that the host country would continue to take measures to prevent interference with the functioning of missions accredited to the United Nations.

Speaking at the meeting, the observer of Cuba, Rene J. Mujica, said there was a problem that was seriously impairing the functioning of the Cuban Mission. For the past few months, a number of persons hostile to Cuba had been demonstrating outside the Cuban Mission, and there had been physical threats and even violence. That represented a pattern of intimidation of which the Secretary-General had been apprised, and Cuba had already requested that the matter be discussed in the General Assembly.

M. James Wilkinson of the United States said the host country regretted the incidents referred to by the representative of Cuba. The United States Mission was working with the appropriate local authorities to deter the demonstrators from not complying with agreed arrangements for demonstrations. He rejected allegations by the representative of Cuba that the United States condoned or tolerated the demonstrations.

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United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/769
15 November 1990

THURSDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Secretary-General's Personal Representative in Afghanistan and Pakistan reiterates appeal to all leaders in Afghanistan and to people as a whole to put interest of nation above all others in order to achieve comprehensive political settlement.

- Preparatory meeting for Paris Conference on Cambodia tells of "significant progress" on draft agreement on comprehensive political settlement of conflict in that country.

- Draft resolution against dumping of nuclear wastes is among 18 proposals approved by General Assembly's Political and Security Committee.

* * *

The Personal Representative of the Secretary-General in Afghanistan and Pakistan, Benon Sevan, has reiterated the Secretary-General's appeal to all Afghan leaders, and to the Afghan people as a whole, to put the interest of the Afghan nation above all others in order to achieve a comprehensive political settlement. Accordingly, he told a news conference in New York yesterday, they should concentrate on appropriate powers and authority required for an impartial transition mechanism, which would enjoy the confidence of the vast majority of the Afghan people. Mr. Sevan stressed that no foreigner could or should impose an external solution on the Afghan people.

Referring to the resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 7 November, Mr. Sevan said the Secretary-General believed it was incumbent on the international community and, above all, the two Guarantors of the settlement (the United States and the Soviet Union) and the immediate neighbours of Afghanistan, to exert all-out efforts in urging all segments of the Afghan people to work out and agree on the arrangements for the establishment of a broad-based government, through a credible and impartial process of free and fair elections, taking into account the Afghan traditions.

Mr. Sevan clarified that by "broad-based government", no particular view as to what form it should take was being espoused. He also stressed that the resolution emphasized the participation of all segments of the Afghan people,

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and did not address itself, and rightly so, to the participation or non-participation of personalities or leaders.

In a related matter, the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights, Felix Ermacora, in a report to the General Assembly, has outlined certain recommendations for the improvement of the human rights situation in Afghanistan.

The report recommended that the United Nations should be called upon to study all the elements of general elections, in order to develop models for a system of such elections in today's Afghanistan as a means of reaching a political solution to the conflict; the political history of Afghanistan and the traditions and customs of its society should be taken into consideration.

The report said the complex situation of human rights in Afghanistan was far from conforming with standards enshrined in the international instruments and should therefore be considered against the background of ongoing conflict. Regrettably, the report concludes, the conflict and the people seemed to have become a "forgotten war" and a "forgotten people".

* * *

The United Nations has been informed that significant progress on a draft agreement on a comprehensive political settlement of the conflict in Cambodia was reached last week in Djakarta at a preparatory meeting for the second Paris Conference on Cambodia. In a letter to the Secretary-General, the two co-Chairmen of the Conference, the representatives of France and Indonesia, said the next step in the process was to invite the members of the Supreme National Council of Cambodia to a meeting in Paris in order to inform them and seek their understanding and support of the progress made so far.

Taking part in the meeting were the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council; the Secretary-General's Special Representative; and, in addition to Indonesia, the representatives of India, Canada, Malaysia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Australia and Japan. Speakers expressed the hope that the Supreme National Council would solve the problems regarding its chairmanship as soon as possible, so as to enable the next meeting to be held and with productive results.

* * *

The General Assembly's Political and Security Committee today approved eight draft resolutions on disarmament issues. By one draft the Assembly would encourage all States to be ready to provide immediate peaceful assistance to any State whose safeguarded nuclear facilities had been subjected to an armed attack.

By the draft, which was approved by 121 votes in favour to 1 against (United States), with 10 abstentions, the Assembly would also call on States parties to the relevant Protocol to consider how the present régime for the protection of nuclear facilities could be improved.

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By a draft resolution on the report of the Conference on Disarmament, the Assembly, taking note of the progress made in negotiating a convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons and the re-establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban, would urge the Conference to provide negotiating mandates to ad hoc committees on all agenda items.

The Committee approved another draft resolution by which the Assembly would request the Secretary-General to carry out a study on the application of confidence-building measures in outer space and to report to the Assembly at its forty-seventh session.

The Committee approved a draft resolution asking the Assembly to welcome the report of the Secretary-General on the role of the United Nations in the field of verification, and to ask him to take appropriate action, within available resources, on the recommendations of the Expert Group that carried out the study.

Among nine drafts approved by the Committee yesterday, one would have the Assembly call on all States to take measures to prevent any dumping of nuclear wastes that infringed on the sovereignty of States. By another draft the Assembly would request the Conference on Disarmament to consider the question of the verified cessation and prohibition of the production of fissionable material for weapons purposes. The Committee also approved a draft to have the Assembly recommend that the Conference on Disarmament pursue negotiations in order to conclude effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

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United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/770
16 November 1990

FRIDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Security Council receives draft proposal for military observers from United Nations Truce Supervision Organization to "monitor" situation of Palestinian civilians in occupied territories.

- $187 million promised for 1991 programmes of United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East at pledging conference presided over by President of General Assembly.

- Security Council and General Assembly, in concurrent meetings, fill five vacancies on World Court; elect judges from France, United Kingdom, Venezuela, Sri Lanka and Madagascar.

- Need to address problems of people in conflict areas stressed as Social Committee continues debate of global refugee situation.

* * *

The Security Council met this morning to continue its consideration of the safety of Palestinian civilians in the occupied territories.

A draft resolution by which the Council would decide that military observers stationed in Jerusalem with the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) should be deployed in the occupied territories to monitor the situation of Palestinian civilians was circulated among Council members.

Sponsored by non-aligned members of the Council -- Colombia, Cuba, Malaysia and Yemen -- the draft would ask the Secretary-General to provide UNTSO with staff and facilities for the monitoring task. It would urge Israel to accept the de jure applicability to the occupied territories of the 1949 Fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, and call on the Convention's high contracting parties to ensure Israel's respect for that instrument. It would further welcome the call for convening, "at an appropriate time, a properly structured international peace conference" to facilitate the achievement of a negotiated settlement and lasting peace in the Middle East.

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The Council is to continue consideration of the matter at a date to be fixed in consultations.

* * *

A total of $187.323 million was pledged this morning to the 1991 programmes of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).

The pledges were made by 38 countries, including the Republic of Kore, the Holy See and the European Economic Community (EEC), at a meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee of the General Assembly for the Announcement of Voluntary Contributions to UNRWA. Two of the larger pledges were made by the United States, with $62 million, and EEC, with $60.192 million. Representatives of several Governments said their pledges were subject to parliamentary approval.

The United Kingdom, New Zealand, Italy, Japan, Canada and Malta said they would announce their contributions at a later date. Some countries made pledges represented as the cash equivalent of contributions in kind.

Planned expenditure for UNRWA's regular programme for 1991 amounts to $255 million, an increase of 5 per cent over that for 1990. In addition, the cost of maintaining the Agency's emergency programmes in Lebanon and the occupied territories in 1991, based on this year's figures, would be $35 million. UNRWA's education, health and social welfare programmes benefit more than 2 million people, two thirds of whom no longer live in refugee camps, according to UNRWA's report to the General Assembly. The projects are financed by voluntary funds, with the annual pledging meetings.

The President of the General Assembly, Guido de Marco (Malta), told today's meeting that during a debate in the Special Political Committee on UNRWA's activities, many delegations had underlined the need for the Agency to continue its work until "a just and lasting settlement" of the Palestinian question was achieved. He appealed to Governments to respond as generously as possible to enable UNRWA to continue to meet its responsibilities on behalf of the international community and thus contribute to the achievement of a just and lasting Middle East settlement.

* * *

The General Assembly and the Security Council, in balloting held simultaneously last night, have elected five judges to the International Court of Justice for nine-year terms beginning this February.

Two of them -- Gilbert Guillaume, of France, and Sir Robert Yewdall Jennings, of the United Kingdom -- are currently serving judges who were re-elected. Elected to their first terms were Andres Aguilar Mawdsley, of Venezuela; Christopher Gregory Weeramantry, of Sri Lanka; and Raymond Ranjeva, of Madagascar.

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Because elections to the Court require an absolute majority of votes in both the Security Council and the General Assembly, four ballots were held in the Assembly in two consecutive meetings yesterday before the same five candidates were chosen by both bodies.

* * *

Speakers in the General Assembly today generally agreed that implementation of the Substantial New Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1980s had not been adequate to bring about any substantial improvement in the socio-economic status of those countries. They referred also to the adverse effects of an unfavourable global economic climate, degradation of the natural environment, and problems associated with structural adjustment programmes.

The 11 speakers in this morning's debate reviewed the outcome of the Second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, held in September in Paris. The Conference, in which 150 Governments participated, reviewed international support rendered to the least developed countries during the past decade and adopted a Programme of Action for them for the 1990s, delineating national and international actions to be pursued over the next decade.

* * *

The need to address the problems of people uprooted by conflicts in Liberia, Rwanda, South-East Asia and Mozambique was stressed this morning, as the Assembly's Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Committee continued its debate on refugee issues. Most speakers called for efforts to create conditions that would prevent new migratory flows and encourage the repatriation of refugees.

The Committee is considering the activities of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), which is mandated to assist refugees world-wide. Particular attention is being given to refugee situations in southern Africa, South-East Asia and Central America.

Addressing the Committee yesterday, Douglas Stafford, Officer-in-Charge of UNHCR, expressed the regret of the Office at the recent departure of Thorvald Stoltenberg as High Commissioner.

What had dominated the work of the past year was "scarcity" -- not of refugees but of every other resource, he said. Since 1980 UNHCR's budget had remained stable at around $500 million while the number of refugees had doubled from 7 million to today's 15 million. For the first time in its history, the Office had had a budget deficit in 1989, representing 10 per cent of the target budget. The only way to cope with that had been to cut refugee programmes and administration costs to bare essentials.

While slashing existing refugee programmes, UNHCR had been hit by fresh crises, he said, such as the exodus of more than 750,000 refugees from Liberia, and more recently the thousands of refugees who had left Rwanda. The UNHCR could not "decline" a refugee crisis on budget grounds. The organization's role was to step in and try to meet that crisis wherever and whenever it occurred.

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United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/771
19 November 1990

MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Secretary-General chairs meeting in Paris of "eminent persons" on consequences of Persian Gulf crisis for world economy; will contact participants for follow-up meeting in the next few days.

- Secretary-General welcomes Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe; addresses Paris Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe.

- Secretary-General holds talks with Foreign Minister of Algeria on Gulf situation, and on United Nations operation for Western Sahara on which he intends to report shortly to Security Council.

- General Assembly hears calls for continued efforts to complete decolonization.

- Political and Security Committee ends debate on Disarmament approving a total of 54 drafts on that issue.

* * *

Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar chaired a meeting in Paris on Saturday, at the headquarters of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), of 20 "eminent persons", called together at his initiative to discuss informally the consequences of the Persian Gulf crisis on the world economy.

At the end of the day-long meeting, the Secretary-General read out a summary of the proceedings, outlining to the participants common ground and the scope for future action.

The Secretary-General told reporters afterwards that the meeting had been "totally informal". Many ideas had been discussed to help "the innocent victims of the crisis" and he said the participants, who had come to the Paris meeting in their private capacity, had agreed to remain in contact with him. The Secretary-General would form a "group of friends", numbering five of the participants chosen on a regional basis, as well as representative of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, and the European Economic

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Community (EEC) in order "to see if we can obtain something concrete". Mr. Perez de Cuellar expressed the hope that "a very tangible follow-up" would be set up in the next few days when he would be in touch with the participants again.

Answering questions on the Persian Gulf crisis, the Secretary-General said that as far as the United Nations sanctions against Iraq were concerned, they had already "started to produce the effect that the Security Council desires", but it was not possible to say how much more time was needed for them to be effective, nor was it for the Secretary-General to interfere in a matter concerning the Security Council.

To a question on the possibilities of a peaceful solution, he replied that he was unable for the time being to see any peaceful options, "which I very much regret". The main hope would be the meeting of Arab countries in Rabat, if it took place.

* * *

In a statement made through his spokeswoman today on the occasion of the signing of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) at the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE), the Secretary-General called the Treaty "a very important accomplishment".

The product of intensive and detailed negotiations, the CFE Treaty was more than simply a reflection of political change, Mr. Perez de Cuellar said; it was an indispensable building block of a new framework for the security of Europe and North America.

With its interconnected set of limits on major combat equipment, the CFE Treaty would help to ensure that force reductions in Europe were carried out in a co-operative and stabilizing fashion. The Treaty would erect substantial barriers against surprise attack and large-scale offensive operations; and it would also establish an impressive array of verification and data-exchange measures to increase transparency and foster greater confidence. While it had been crafted to meet the particular circumstances of European security, its scope and character nevertheless might prove a valuable guide for negotiations among States in other regions.

* * *

Also in Paris today, the Secretary-General addressed the opening meeting of the 34-nation summit Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE). He said he found it gratifying that Europe, after the peaceful changes in Central Europe, did not seek to concentrate on itself; the CSCE process itself was transcontinental.

Seeing the new Europe being shaped by the Conference, Mr. Perez de Cuellar said he perceived major opportunities for co-operation between it and the United Nations on matters of common and urgent concern to both.

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Those opportunities included efforts to prevent and solve conflicts affecting international peace and security; agreements on arms limitation and disarmament; the consolidation of a universal human rights regime; global economic development; the protection of the environment; and action to combat social plagues like illicit drug-trafficking, infectious diseases and internationalized crime.

Mr. Perez de Cuellar emphasized that the European region, like all others in the global community, should be confident of the readiness and ability of the United Nations to lend its assistance in solving disputes of all kinds. Being the responsibility of the region, the question of Cyprus was one such dispute that must be mentioned. He called for the necessary support to the United Nations efforts for a peaceful and definitive settlement of that 27-year-old question.

The European group of nations, he continued, enjoyed a high percentage of the world's productive capacity, of its advanced technology and of its capital wealth -- all essential elements in overcoming the misery and social dislocations that lay at the roots of many disputes and conflicts in other regions. However, the arc of developed nations that reached now across the northern hemisphere must not stop at a line dividing North from South, but must continue and form a circle within which North and South could jointly prosper.

Mr. Perez de Cuellar noted, "as a man of the South", that the North would be "seated on a clay throne as long as the South will not enjoy a minimum of well-being".

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In Paris yesterday, the Secretary-General met with Sid Ahmed Ghozali, Foreign Minister of Algeria, for a discussion on the Gulf situation and the question of Western Sahara.

On the Gulf, the Foreign Minister and the Secretary-General discussed possibilities for lowering the tension in the area. Following his exchange of views on final details of a United Nations operation for Western Sahara, the Secretary-General intends to present to the Security Council a full and detailed report before the end of November.

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Calls for continued efforts to complete the decolonization of the remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories were contained in draft resolutions introduced this morning in the General Assembly.

The drafts were introduced by the Chairman of the Special Committee on decolonization, Tesfaye Tadesse (Ethiopia). By an omnibus text on the thirtieth anniversary of the Declaration on decolonization, the Assembly would urge administering Powers and others to ensure that the activities of foreign economic and other interests in colonial territories did not run counter to

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the interests of the local people or impede decolonization. It would also urge Member States to discontinue economic, financial and trade relations with South Africa. Another text, on implementation of the Declaration, would have the Assembly approve the Special Committee's report and call on States to give effect to its recommendations, and call also for the withdrawal of military bases and installations from colonial Territories.

On Friday, the Assembly completed its review of the conclusions of the Second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries and also elected States to fill 18 out of 19 impending vacancies on the Economic and Social Council. Argentina, Austria, Botswana, Chile, France, Germany, Guinea, Japan, Malaysia, Morocco, Peru, Somalia, Spain, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey and Yugoslavia were elected to three-year terms on the Economic and Social Council beginning on 1 January 1991. Romania was elected to serve for the remainder of the term of the former German Democratic Republic, until the end of 1992, now that unified Germany is occupying a single seat. No State received the required two-thirds majority with respect to one of the Council seats allocated to an Asian State, so that election was deferred until a time and date to be fixed in consultations.

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The Assembly's Political and Security Committee has concluded its discussion on more than 20 disarmament-related subjects. During the course of its work in this area, which ended on Friday, the Committee approved a total of 54 draft resolutions.

It approved a text calling on the General Assembly to request the Secretary-General to carry out a study on the conversion of military resources to civilian activities for protecting the environment.

Under the provisions of another draft, the Assembly would call on all parties to contribute to the success of the Amendment Conference for the 1963 partial nuclear test-ban Treaty, to be held next January, and reiterate that, pending the conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty, the nuclear-weapon States should suspend all nuclear tests.

That draft, approved by a recorded vote of 98 in favour to 2 against (United Kingdom, United States), with 28 abstentions, would also have the Assembly recommend that the Conference establish a working group to study the aspects of a comprehensive test-ban treaty and report its conclusions to the Conference.

By another draft, approved by a vote of 107 in favour to 3 against (France, United Kingdom, United States), with 18 abstentions, the Assembly would urge all nuclear-weapon States to discontinue all nuclear-test explosions.

A related draft would have the Assembly urge the Conference on Disarmament to re-establish the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban at the beginning of the 1991 session to focus, specifically, on issues of structure

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and scope as well as verification and compliance. This draft was approved by a vote of 122 in favour to 2 against (France, United States), with 6 abstentions.

Among other drafts approved by the Committee, one proposes that the Assembly reiterate its condemnation of Israel's refusal to renounce possession of nuclear weapons and its military co-operation with South Africa. The Assembly would also demand that Israel place all its nuclear facilities under International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards and call on all countries that had not yet done so to discontinue co-operating with Israel in the nuclear field. The draft was approved by a vote of 84 in favour to 2 against (Israel, United States), with 38 abstentions.

Other drafts approved by the Committee deal with bilateral nuclear-arms talks, the denuclearization of Africa, and the nuclear capability of South Africa.

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United Nations

Press Release

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TUESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- General Assembly endorses Secretary-General's intermediary role in El Salvador, calls for support for Central American peace efforts.

- Secretary-General expresses concern at information received of renewed operations against military targets by Frente Farabundo Marti para la Liberacion Nacional (FMLN) in El Salvador.

- Contributions totalling $141 million for refugee programmes in 1991 announced at pledging conference.

- Secretary-General is considering "favourably" the idea of sending his Personal Representative, Jean-Claude Aime, to Israel and occupied territories.

- United Nations Development Programme pushes to set up centre for environment and development for Arab region and Europe.

* * *

The General Assembly this morning fully endorsed the Secretary-General's active role as an intermediary to accelerate negotiations between the Government of El Salvador and the Frente Farabundo Marti para la Liberacion Nacional (FMLN).

It took that action when it adopted, without a vote, a resolution which also requested the Secretary-General to continue to support Central American efforts to consolidate peace, especially by taking the necessary measures for the establishment of verification machinery. The Assembly appealed to countries that were outside the region, but that had links and interests in it, to facilitate the peace process. It urged the international community to increase technical, economic and financial co-operation with the Central American countries.

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For information media--not an official record

In a statement issued at Headquarters today, a spokesman said the Secretary-General viewed with concern the information he had received of renewed operations against military targets by FMLN in El Salvador.

According to the statement, while there was no prior commitment by the parties to cease military action, FMLN had at the beginning of the negotiating process last April promised to refrain from certain categories of actions in order to strengthen confidence in its political will and in the Secretary-General's good offices. That commitment was reiterated to the Secretary-General by a senior commander of FMLN as recently as September. The Secretary-General said he trusted and expected adherence to that commitment.

While it was too soon, according to the statement, to predict an imminent major breakthrough in the talks as a result of the efforts in October by the Secretary-General's Representative, Alvaro de Soto, to reinvigorate the negotiating process, the Secretary-General firmly believed that, given the necessary political will, the possibility to make important progress towards the initial objective of achieving political agreements leading to a cease-fire was within sight.

The Secretary-General reiterated his appeal for restraint at this critical juncture, so that the continuing cycle of violence would not jeopardize the negotiating process.

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Contributions totalling $140,830,531 were announced this morning at a pledging conference for the 1991 programmes of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

The Executive Committee of UNHCR has approved a general programme budget of $345.5 million for 1991, and special programme requirements and extrabudgetary food needs are estimated at $214.9 million.

Opening the meeting, Darko Silovic (Yugoslavia), a Vice-President of the Assembly, said there was a pressing need for the international community to provide UNHCR with the necessary resources to carry out its crucial activities.

Since the last pledging conference, some major positive developments had taken place on the global refugee scene, he said. Solutions had been found to some problems, such as the voluntary repatriation of Central American and Afghan refugees, as well as Vietnamese and Namibians. However, other events had given rise to concern, such as the exodus of more than half a million Liberian refugees into neighbouring countries.

The External Relations Director of UNHCR, Sergio Vieira de Mello, called the pledging conference a "slightly disappointing success", since the total contributions announced today were less than last year's record figure of $165.6 million. The amount pledged would have to provide international protection and assistance to the 15 million refugees world-wide.

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The Secretary-General, in a statement attributable to his spokeswoman, was said to be considering favourably the idea of sending his Personal Representative, Jean-Caude Aime, to Israel and the occupied territories. The Secretary-General had discussed the idea with a number of dignitaries in Paris, among whom was the Israeli Foreign Minister.

The Secretary-General, according to the statement, continued to be "deeply concerned" about the situation in the occupied territories and, accordingly, felt that a visit by his envoy might be useful. He did not, however, wish to prejudice the outcome of the Security Council's present deliberations on the situation in the occupied territories. A visit by Mr. Aime, it was stated, would most probably take place following the current consideration of the matter by the Council.

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A new Centre for Environment and Development for the Arab Region and Europe (CEDARE), proposed by UNDP's Regional Bureau for Arab States and Europe, is expected to be set up in time to have an input into the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Brazil.

Four Arab countries -- Algeria, Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia -- are competing to host the Centre. The first staff is expected to be recruited shortly after the decision early next year on where to place the Centre.

Only five weeks after the invasion of Kuwait, the UNDP initiative had drawn unanimous approval from 18 Arab States meeting in Damascus. They had put aside other differences to endorse the plan for a centre to stimulate and co-ordinate environmental research in the region.

The UNDP has now pledged seed funding of at least $5 million over five years to set up the Centre, and further funding is expected from a variety of sources, local and international. Agencies, from the World Bank to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), have welcomed the initiative.

The CEDARE will initially focus on four issues: desertification and land degradation (over 90 per cent of the Arab world is either semi-arid or drier); marine resources and pollution in the Red Sea, the Gulf and the Mediterranean through which so much of the world's oil tanker traffic flows; urbanization in cities like Cairo, with a population of over 15 million; and the use of freshwater resources.

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